

FAN-TALES NEWSLETTER

MAHURU | SEPTEMBER 2026

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

As we look to the months ahead, there is plenty to be excited about at the Brook Waimārama Sanctuary. From ongoing conservation successes to promising projects in the pipeline, we continue to build momentum towards an even stronger future for the Sanctuary.

The team, alongside the Department of Conservation, have been busy this week undertaking the kākārīki karaka count. It was also fantastic to hear that a kea—yes, that's right, a kea—was spotted (and photographed) within the Sanctuary during the count! There is always something happening and plenty of activity to get excited about here at the Sanctuary.

It is also encouraging to see the continued growth of native bird species. A huge thank you to Katherine Chamberlain, Simon Hoyle and the team for their remarkable commitment to 17 years of 5-minute bird counts, with the results now published in Notornis, the Journal of Birds of New Zealand.

Our education programmes are starting to pick up, with more schools booking visits and bringing the next generation into the Sanctuary to learn, explore and develop a deeper connection with nature. A special thank you must go to Rick Field for his continued commitment in delivering our education programmes and helping inspire the next generation of environmental guardians.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who supports the Sanctuary through donations, fundraising and other generous contributions. Your support helps make our conservation and education work possible and protects this special place for the future.

Please continue to keep up to date with the latest news and developments at the Sanctuary. Thank you for being part of our journey. None of what we achieve would be possible without the incredible support of our volunteers, members, partners, donors and the wider community.

Ngā mihi nui,
Chris McCormack
Brook Waimārama Sanctuary Trust





Blessed be the track-cutters

A common phrase heard around the Sanctuary amongst staff and volunteers is “blessed be the track cutters” – and for good reason!

Our Track Maintenance Volunteer Team are the quiet achievers who work behind the scenes to keep the Sanctuary's tracks safe, accessible and looking their best.

Throughout the year, this dedicated team tackles everything from clearing overgrown vegetation and fallen branches to maintaining steps, drains, bridges and track surfaces. Their regular work is particularly important after wild weather, ensuring visitors, staff and volunteers can safely explore the Sanctuary and enjoy the thriving native forest.

It's hands-on, practical work that makes a huge difference. Much of what they do may go unnoticed, but the impact is felt by everyone who walks through the gates.

We are incredibly grateful to our Track Maintenance Team for giving their time, energy and expertise to care for the tracks and infrastructure that connect people with the Sanctuary.

Thank you to our track cutters – we're certainly lucky to be “blessed” by you!



Sanctuary Initiatives

The latest updates



Junior Rangers Nature Detectives

Over a recent weekend, Eve, our Junior Ranger Facilitator, led an exciting Nature Detectives activity.

Our Junior Rangers learned how to spot the clues animals leave behind, before heading into the Sanctuary to run their own wildlife monitoring line. The group then created their own tracking tunnels to take home and discover what wildlife might be visiting their backyards.

It was a fantastic day of hands-on learning, exploration and conservation!

Find out more!
www.brooksanctuary.org.nz/junior-ranger



A NIGHT IN THE FOREST SPECIAL!

Experience the magic of the forest on a guided night tour. We have a special 25% off night tours during September and October. Use promo code: NIGHT25

Listen for ruru and kiwi pukupuku, and take in the soft glow of resident glowworms beneath towering trees. All proceeds support the Sanctuary's vital conservation work. Bookings available from our website.

We can also accommodate large group bookings — please get in touch to discuss options.

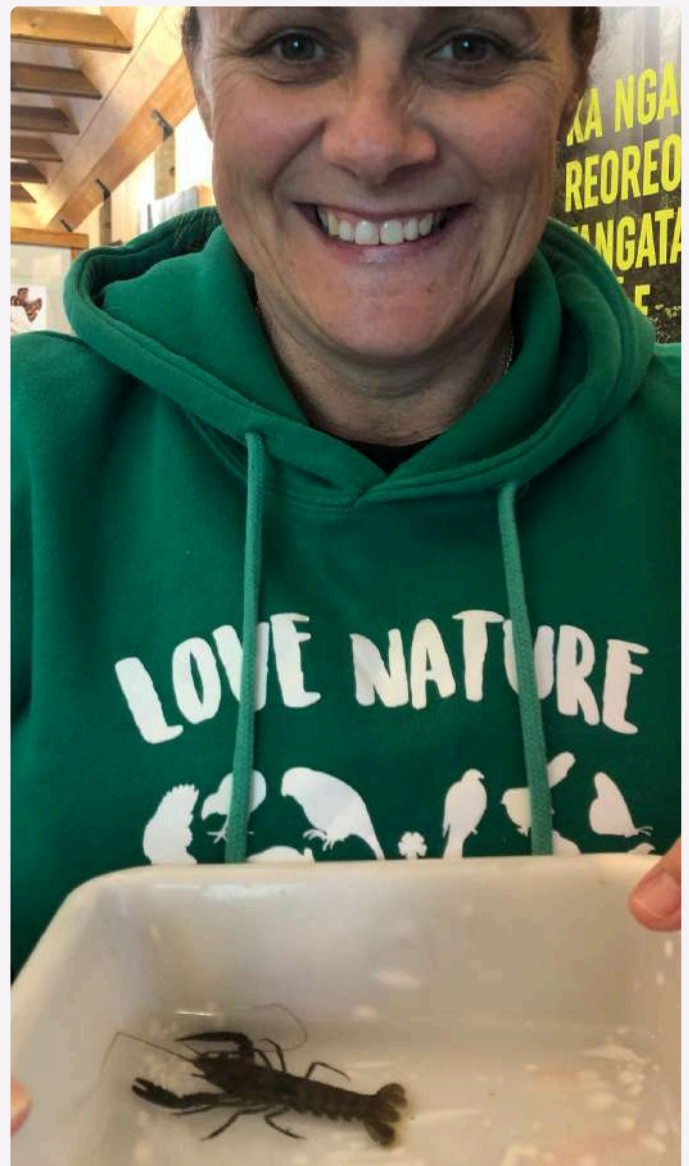
From Classroom to Sanctuary

As part of the Science Teaching Leadership Programme (STLP), I had the incredible opportunity to spend time at the Brook Waimārama Sanctuary and experience conservation based science first-hand. It was a perfect extension of my work with Enviroschools and an excellent context for science learning.

One of the highlights was being involved in breed-for-release programmes and seeing the important roles that our local zoo and sanctuary play in restoring habitats and populations of threatened taonga species. Seeing how the translocated kiwi and tuatara have flourished at the Brook Waimārama Sanctuary is a powerful reminder of what conservation can achieve when people work together.

These species are part of both the history and the future of this place, a living symbol of the connection between humans and the land. I was especially grateful to witness the first group of kākā being given their names by Ngāti Apa ki te Rā Tō and being released into their new home at the Sanctuary.

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Sanctuary Initiatives



Through Sanctuary educator Rick Field and his contacts in the science community, I learned that species recovery in Aotearoa is a network of people and places – breeding facilities, zoos, wildlife sanctuaries, private conservationists, iwi, scientists, volunteers and community groups all have different skills, resources and roles to play.

It was a privilege to see this work in action, to be alongside Sanctuary staff who gave up their time to help me and to have space outside the busy classroom to consider how I can bring these stories of conservation and collaboration back to tamariki at Birchwood School to enhance our science teaching and learning.

My experiences at the Brook Waimārama Sanctuary, alongside Natureland Zoo, Cawthron Institute and the Nelson City Council have shown me the value of sharing real-world science and the stories of the people who are using science to make a difference.

We want tamariki at Birchwood to see themselves as capable citizens and important contributors to the science community, knowing that their questions, ideas and discoveries matter.

Through this, we can help them develop a deeper understanding of, and connection to, our world, and know that they too can take an active role in caring for and protecting our taonga species and unique taiao.

A special acknowledgement to the Royal Society of New Zealand for funding this programme.

Written by Shelley Roberts





Kaitiaki Membership

Our Kaitiaki (Guardian) membership is the ideal sponsorship for businesses of any size — \$1,000 per year or \$100 per month + gst.

Kaitiaki receive:

- Opportunity for collaborative opportunities through social media
- Acknowledgment on the Brook Sanctuary website with a hyperlink to your website
- Display the Sanctuary logo on your website or marketing materials
- Add a dedicated partnership page on your website
- 5 individual or 2 family memberships
- 10 general admission passes to share,
- 20% off tours for your team or clients

Contact Chris directly for more information - chris.mccormack@brooksanctuary.org.nz

Thank you to our Business Supporters

We're grateful to our Business Club & Kaitiaki members for their ongoing support of the Sanctuary. Their contributions help us protect native species, maintain our unique environment, and welcome visitors to experience the ngahere.



Scottish Express Sponsorship

Explore more for less with Scottish Express monthly specials and scheduled trips, offering convenient per-seat pricing across our most popular routes.

Every journey also gives back, with 5% of all transport fares supporting The Brook Waimārama Sanctuary. Travel with purpose while enjoying flexible, affordable transport options.



Support The Brook Waimārama Sanctuary in The Spectacle 2026

The Spectacle 2026 brings runners and walkers of all abilities together in the heart of Whakatū Nelson — from the mile to the 100-mile challenge.

You can support the Brook Waimārama Sanctuary by making a donation or taking part and fundraising for us. Every contribution, big or small, helps protect and restore our native wildlife and ngahere.

www.spectacle26.grassrootz.com/the-brook-waimarama-sanctuary



Waimārama Wildling Ale

A special thanks to Jason and Monica from Aliment Brewing, who have partnered with Froth Technologies to support the Sanctuary through their new brew - Waimārama Wildling Ale

From Dunedin to Auckland, the brew is making its way around the country—and helping put the Sanctuary on the map!

Strategic Supporters



Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai



NBS

Community
We believe. We invest.



Recent snaps in the Sanctuary



Juliette Fris - Adult Amateur Photographer



Matti Raven - Adult Amateur Photographer



Katrina Raven - Tuatara



Chris McCormack - stargazing from the Sanctuary



September is Wills Month – Leave a Lasting Legacy

This Wills Month, we invite you to consider leaving a lasting legacy for nature. By including the Brook Waimārama Sanctuary in your Will, you can help protect our precious wildlife and native forest for generations to come.

Every gift, large or small, can make a meaningful difference to the future of the Sanctuary and the species that call it home. If you like to further discuss, please contact us, or find out more on our website.

Together, we can ensure that this special place continues to thrive for generations to come.

Save the Date – Annual General Meeting

Mark your diary! Our AGM will be held on Thursday, 22 October 2026, at 12 noon at the Rutherford Hotel. We look forward to seeing our members, supporters and community there.



Forest and Bird Talk

by Alison Ballance: "The biggest kākāpō breeding season on record". Wednesday 8th September, 7.30pm, Tāhunanui School Hall, 69 Muritai St, Nelson.

2026 is a year for the kākāpō record books. Host of RNZ's Kākāpō Files podcast, Alison Ballance, shares the story of the bumper breeding season, from the first male booming to the last chick reaching independence.

Seated & Walking Meditation

Lose Yourself in Nature. Coming Home to Presence.

Gather at The Beech Glade classroom, within the beautiful Brook Waimārama Sanctuary, for a gentle and grounding hour of guided meditation in nature.

Next sessions:

- Sunday, 13 Sept - 9:00am
- Sunday, 27 Sept - 9:00am
- Sunday, 11 Oct - 9:00am
- Sunday, 25 Oct - 9:00am





Bring the Sanctuary to Your Community

Would your community group, business, retirement village, or organisation like to learn more about Brook Waimārama Sanctuary?

Our team is available to present engaging talks on the Sanctuary's conservation work, native wildlife, species reintroductions, and the positive impact being made to protect our unique natural environment. Whether it's a club meeting, workplace, or community event, we'd love to share our story and answer your questions.

If you're interested in hosting a Brook Waimārama Sanctuary talk, please get in touch with us at info@brooksanctuary.org.nz.



Become a Sanctuary Member



Join today

Why Become a Member?

Becoming a member of the Brook Waimārama Sanctuary means you're directly supporting the protection and restoration of native wildlife while enjoying year-round access to one of the South Island's most unique conservation landscapes.

Membership benefits include:

- Unlimited Sanctuary entry — visit as often as you like to walk, explore, and reconnect with nature - during our opening hours
- Priority access to events and experiences — from guided tours to seasonal activities and expert talks.
- Monthly Fan Tales newsletter – our avidly read monthly newsletter sent out to over 5000 people all over the world
- Support for conservation action — your membership funds weed and pest control, habitat restoration, and species reintroduction programs.
- Connection to the Sanctuary community — invitations to member briefings, behind-the-scenes updates, and impact reports.

Becoming a member is more than a ticket — it's a commitment to sustaining native forest, wildlife, and a legacy that future generations can enjoy.



Social Media Highlights

What's been happening online:

Our Fence Hood needs a scrub!

Just like your dirty car bonnet, our fence 'hood' needs a scrub once in a while.

While the lichen growing on the mesh helps the fence blend into the surrounding forest, lichen on the hood can be a problem. The hood plays a vital role in keeping the Sanctuary pest-free, so we need to make sure there's no extra grip or purchase that could help pests make their way over.

Misty weather works in our favour, helping to loosen the crusty lichen and making it easier to remove.

We were also lucky enough to spot a couple of springtime treasures along the way — the native cranberry moth (*Poecilasthena pulchraria*) and an early spring bloom of puawānanga (*Clematis paniculata*).

Photo credits: Henry Hart



Sanctuary staff working hard cleaning the fence hood



Native cranberry moth, *Poecilasthena pulchraria*



Puawānanga, *Clematis paniculata*



Sanctuary fence hood, half cleaned, half covered in lichen



Social Media Highlights

What's been happening online:

Keep up to date on Socials

Keep up to date on our socials for the latest news, updates, and behind-the-scenes content.

Follow us to stay connected and never miss an announcement.



Support the future of the Sanctuary

The return of kiwi and other threatened species to the Sanctuary is only possible because of the ongoing support of our community. Every donation helps protect not only kiwi, but many other native species that call the Sanctuary home.

Your support contributes to vital pest control, habitat restoration, species monitoring, and education programmes that ensure future generations can experience thriving native wildlife in Nelson.

Whether large or small, every contribution makes a real difference. By donating you are helping create a safer future for kiwi, tuatara, native birds, insects, and the unique forest ecosystems they depend on.

Thank you for standing with us and helping nature flourish.

Donate today!

City Office | 54 Montgomery Square, Nelson | 03 546 2422
Visitor Centre - Sanctuary Entrance | 651 Brook Street | 03 539 4920
Postal Address | PO Box 744, Nelson 7040
Email: info@brooksanctuary.org.nz
www.brooksanctuary.org.nz

