



Bob Walkington and Rex Hartley

Pests busted

SOUTH Taranaki Branch is the inaugural winner of Forest & Bird's annual Pestbuster Award.

The mainstays of the branch's pest-busting efforts are Rex Hartley and Bob Walkington, who between them busted 400 rats, 64 possums, 47 hedgehogs, 43 goats, 22 stoats, 11 weasels, six feral cats, three magpies, two ferrets and one rabbit in the last year.

The pair has been conducting pest control on two bush blocks near Eltham – the result-

ing reduction in introduced pests has brought an increase in numbers of native birds, including North Island robins and brown kiwi.

"Possum and rat numbers are nothing like they were in the blocks 15-20 years ago. Native orchids have really come away and the young native trees are doing well with fewer possums," Bob says.

Their secret weapon? Reject pizza cheese from Fonterra's Eltham plant is the perfect bait, Bob reckons.



Baby birds

EARTHLINGS, a company making eco-friendly baby-wear, is donating \$1 from the sale of each item of its bird-printed clothing range to Forest & Bird.

Co-owner Hannah Shone says the bird prints – featuring the kakapo, fantail, pukeko, morepork and Chatham Island oystercatcher are hand printed using silk screens and water-based eco-friendly inks on 100% organic cotton.

Shone and partner Tim Thickpenny came up with the idea for the business around

the time their daughter was born in late 2005.

The couple was alarmed by the amount of pesticides and other chemicals used in conventional cotton farming – and the potential effects on human health, as well as the wider environmental impacts.

Shone says they were also deeply concerned by the plight of New Zealand's threatened birds, so decided to donate some of their proceeds of their clothing line towards their protection.

"We hope that people enjoy the prints and learn more about our endangered species. And by wearing our prints they not only protect their own children but are also supporting Forest & Bird's work to protect New Zealand's birdlife."

Earthlings' collection will be launched in September. For more information go to www.earthlings.co.nz



North Island robin

Tauranga, Taupo and Tuhua

FOREST & Bird members from Tauranga and Taupo enjoyed a day trip to Mayor Island (Tuhua), a natural forested volcanic island off Tauranga. Some of the group of nearly 40 made the steep climb to the trig at the island's highest point, while others took easier paths in lower parts of



Pohutukawa on Mayor Island

the island. The group enjoyed bird song and glimpses of kaka, kereru and robin (toutouwai) as well as fur seals, and the island's impressive stands of pohutakawa – including one massive tree with a trunk of 4.5 metres diameter.

Grainne Simmons



Jesse Byrthell

Ranunculus ranunculoides

Native namesake

INVERCARGILL Forest & Bird members Chris and Brian Rance have been awarded one of the highest honours in botany – having a plant named after them.

A newly-described native buttercup from Fiordland has been named *Ranunculus ranunculoides* (meaning "of the Rances") in recognition of their dedication to conservation and the native plant life of the southern South Island.

The couple run a community nursery specialising in rare native plants and have wide involvement in research, conservation and photography of native plants.



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Brian and Chris Rance