OUR TEAM

Janine Smith
Project Executive

Caitlin Daley
Project Manager

Colin Delahunt
Project Manager

Eilis Hogan
Field Officer

Morgan Trotter
Project Advisor

Bill Morris
Communications

Natalie Willis
Secretary

Margo Hall
Nursery

Carolyn Steele
Nursery

Hannah Tatton
Nursery

Lee-Ann Adams
Nursery

OUR STRATEGIC PARTNERS

OUR SUPPLY PARTNERS

THE SCROLL

Tiaki Maniototo
www.tiakimaniototo.co.nz

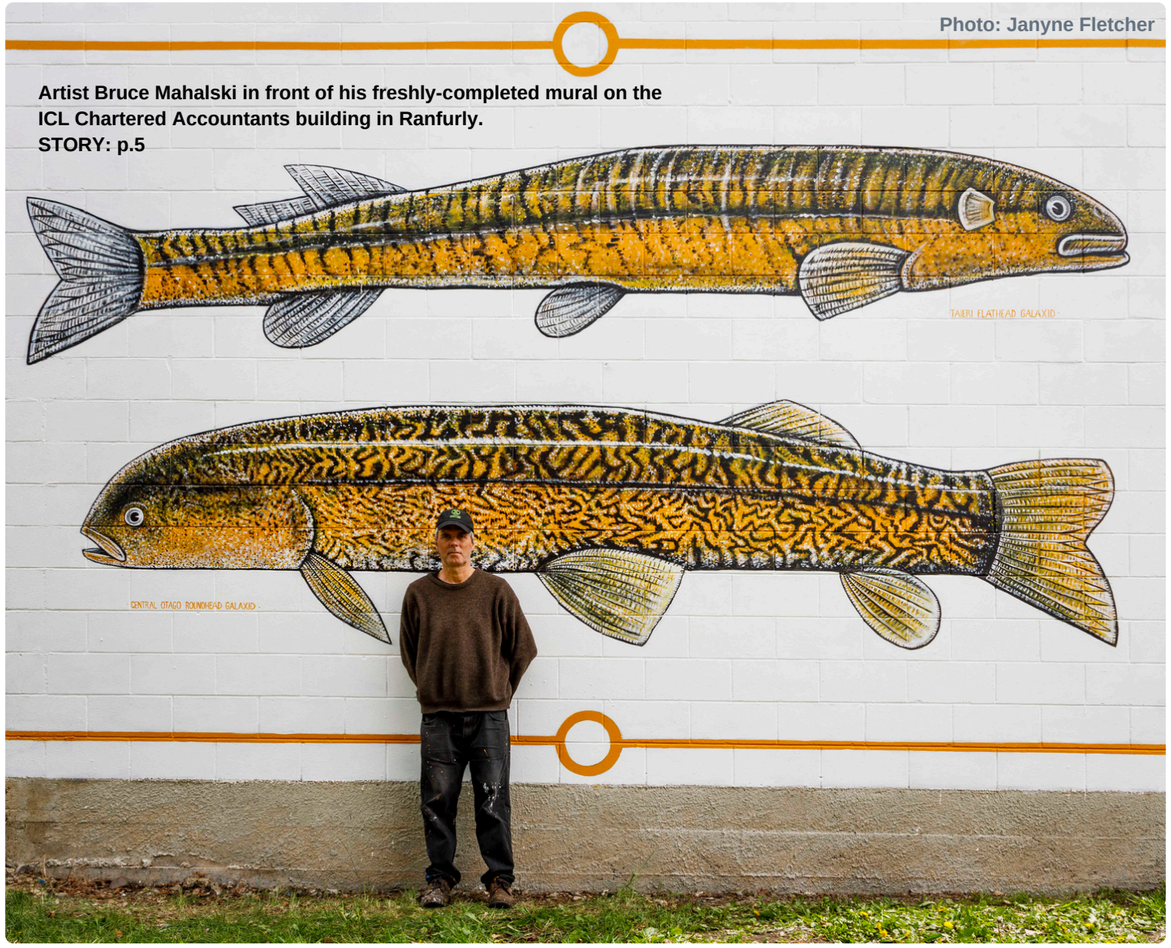
The Newsletter of Tiaki Maniototo

December 2024
Edition #03

SAVE THE DATE! Taiari Wai River Festival 18th January: p 4-5

Photo: Janyne Fletcher

Artist Bruce Mahalski in front of his freshly-completed mural on the ICL Chartered Accountants building in Ranfurly.
STORY: p.5



A WORD FROM THE PROJECT MANAGERS:

Tiaki Maniototo is one example of how working together within a catchment can bring great success. Tiaki Maniototo is the project that is held under Upper Taieri Wai Catchment Group. This funding came about because of a passionate group of people who shared a common vision for improving water quality in the Taieri/Taiari River. Countless volunteer hours went into building a strong funding application with Tiaki Maniototo being the result.

Now, as the project looks towards its second phase, we need the community's help again. In a new political environment, and with two years left on our current funding allocation, both Upper Taieri Wai (UTW) and its Tiaki Maniototo project look forward to building on what we've achieved. We've built a efficient and dedicated team. We've developed infrastructure and systems. Now, we need to harness the passion and determination that drives this project to strengthen UTW so that it can that brings benefit to this region for decades to come. Our rapidly developing community nursery is an example of this. Now is the time to get involved in Upper Taieri Wai, and help us plot a path into the future - Caitlin and Colin.

PLANTING AND FENCING UPDATE

The Habitat Restorations Aotearoa team is in full swing now that summer is here, with thousands of plants destined for wetland and riparian areas in the coming weeks and months.

Project co-manager Colin says “progress on planting targets has far exceeded expectation, a reflection, he says, ”on the interest that the community have in planting riparian areas”.

We’re finding that our planting programme has a snowball effect, as landowners see the benefits of improved water quality along with the aesthetic improvements that planting can make on their properties, hence, more and more are signing up for our subsidised fencing and planting scheme.

Tiaki Maniototo can subsidise riparian fencing at a rate of: $7.20 per metre (excl GST) for standard 7 wire fencing. We have a range of rates for different kinds of fencing, see our website or get in touch with our project managers, Colin 021 283 6256 or Caitlin 021 262 9621 to get started.

www.tiakimaniototo.co.nz

Photo: Habitat Restorations

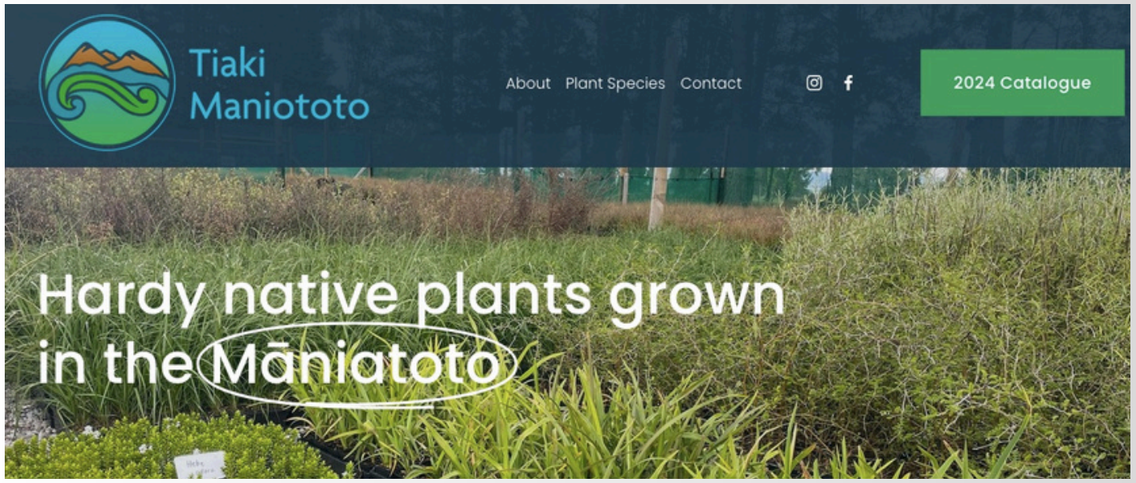
NURSERY OPEN FOR BUSINESS

The nursery is going great guns with staff currently potting up thousands of plants for the summer planting season.

Plant maintenance is also critical as weeds start to flourish with the warming days. Nursery manager Margo Hall says this is the busiest time of year for the team,

The nursery is now open for plant sales. Wednesday to Friday’s between 11am and 3.00pm. A plant price list is available on our website:

www.tiakimaniototonursery.co.nz



CRAYFISH FARMING

Native kōura, or freshwater crayfish, are the ecosystem engineers of the freshwater world. They help clean up waterways —by stirring up sediment with their constant foraging, they help move the muck downstream. They also clean up organic material.

At the same time, kōura need really clean water to survive, so as a landowner, if you have kōura in your streams it’s a sign you’re doing all the right things.

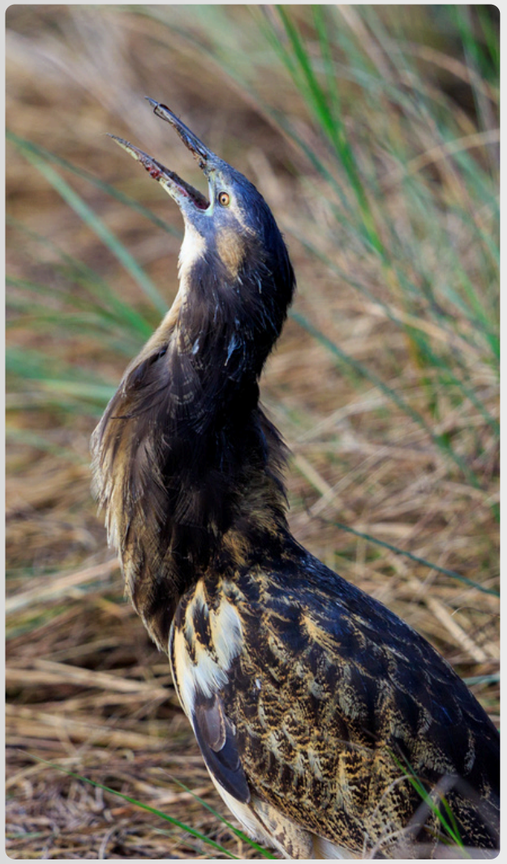
But perhaps kōura could also be a way to diversify farming operations. Around the country, there are heaps of ponds, water races and storage dams that could be used to grow kōura for commercial consumption.
It is a model currently being explored by forestry company Ernslaw One Limited.

Photo: Supplied

Under the leadership of John Hollows, the forestry company has found a new use for fireponds within their forestry blocks and are growing kōura for domestic and international consumption, under the brand name Keewai. They now have almost 2000 ponds throughout Otago and Southland, but the industry needs to grow in order to reach commercial scale. That’s where farmers come in. Kōura can be grown naturally in clean water with little or no inputs. The kōura being grown in Ernslaw One’s forests are not fed, they simply thrive on organic matter naturally falling into the ponds.

The Maniatoto/Maniototo is ripe for kōura farming, and it's a great incentive for farmers to maintain good water quality on their properties.

A BIT ABOUT BITTERN



The extraordinary matuku-hūrepo/Australasian Bittern is critically endangered in New Zealand, largely because so much of their preferred habitat has been lost and degraded. These, secretive & private birds are also highly vulnerable to predators.

We know anecdotely that bittern were once prevalent in the upper Taiari/Taieri. Noel Buchanan, who lived at Patearoa Station in the 1860’s reported they were “not infrequent” on the scroll plain back then.

These days they’re much rarer, in fact we haven’t had any reports of bittern here for many decades. That’s not to say they aren’t here, bittern tend to move around a lot and so they could be spending time here on a transient basis, so once ensconced in a wetland they are very hard to detect. The best way to find them is to listen for their distinctive ‘booming’ call. This summer, Tiaki Maniototo has 15 audio recorders out on the scroll plain thanks to Birds NZ (https://www.birdsnz.org.nz/) and the ORC who have funded the project.

DOC will also be surveying for bittern throughout along the Scroll Plain this summer.

Recently we had ecologist Wendy Ambury from the Love Bittern Trust visit to check out the area. Wendy is passionate about these birds and the wetlands they live in, and held a public workshop on the river providing some great tips for planting specifically with bittern in mind.

One of the most important plants for bittern, and many other wetland species, is raupō, or bullrush. Raupō forms the basis of healthy wetland ecosystems, providing cover, shelter, and food for many species as well as the eels and small fish which they like to hunt.

For more information about protecting or restoring raupō wetlands on your property, get in touch with out project team.

UPPER TAIERI WAI

Upper Taieri Wai Incorporated (UTW) is the catchment group here in the Maniototo and they are looking for more local members. UTW, once called Upper Taieri Water Resource Management Group (UTG) was first established in 2007 and had a strong membership base of farmers and stakeholder groups.

Fast forward 17 years and the local membership has dropped away considerably. UTW held their AGM in late November with a focus of reestablishing themselves as a pivotal part of the community, with specific focus on water quality and its interaction with farming. At the AGM the resignation of Chairwoman Kate Wilson and Secretary Jo Paterson were accepted. Both Jo and Kate have given a considerable amount of time and support to both UTG & UTW, we would like to publicly thank them for this once more.

In early 2025 the Otago Regional Council (ORC) will begin the work on the Integrated Catchment Management Plan for the Taieri FMU. ORC wants to work with catchment groups to help build this plan and therefore UTW wants to know and feel that they have the support and mandate from their local community to be this conduit.

UTW are also looking at how they can help support those who are farming near or close to the scroll plain be 'ahead of the game', rather than reactive to regulation changes. After the government revoked the stock exclusion rules for low slope and wetlands the stock exclusion exemption for the Upper Taieri is no longer required. However, the community has an opportunity to develop a scroll plain management plan with a practical approach that works for farming and the delicate nature of the wetlands.

UTW know that through a strong and supportive membership group they can make this work well for the farmers, landowners and community members living in the Upper Taieri (Paerau to Tiroiti). They want to continue to build on the momentum of the Tiaki Maniototo project and start looking for the next opportunity to protect the good health of the river and surrounding ecosystems.

The membership is set for the year ahead at $20 per member/farm. If you would like to join UTW or learn more then please contact uppertaieriwai@gmail.com for a membership form.

CREAMERY BRIDGE DEVELOPMENT

If you've driven on the Patearoa road or Puketoi road recently, you'll see we've done some willow clearance at Creamery Bridge and Cogans Bridge. These are two areas we're developing for community use. In the coming weeks, we'll be planting these out with natives, replacing the willow trees that were restricting access and also starting to pose a danger through falling branches with native species that will boost biodiversity and make for beautiful riverside areas that people can access the river.

We're thankful for our group of volunteers and welcome others to help to get hundreds of plants into these sites. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for more information. In the meantime, our "in-house" artist Paulina Barry has come up with a visual drawing of what the Creamery Bridge site may eventually look like—a thriving wetland area thick with harakeke/flax, raupō/bullrush and kōwhai.

CATCHMENT GROUPS

What's the deal with catchment groups and why do they matter? We asked some experts.

Catchment groups come about when a group of locals who are passionate about the waterways that provide them with economic benefit, food resources, drinking water and recreational opportunities come together to achieve good outcomes for freshwater.

"Catchment groups," says Sam Dixon of Otago Catchments Community, "are powerful tools for fostering community-driven solutions to shared challenges." Catchment groups typically focus on water quality, biodiversity or pest and weed control. "By working collaboratively," Sam says, "communities take ownership of their decisions and actions, creating longer-lasting, impactful change."

Jack Mathieson, Environmental Catchment Advisor with the Otago Regional Council, says working with catchment groups is about tapping into" the "established, active, and knowledge-rich voice of rural communities."

It's an observation shared by Marc Tadaki, of Cawthorn Institute, who has studied catchment groups around New Zealand in detail. "Catchment groups," he says, "are a platform for engaging with others, building a sense of place, building a sense of shared ownership. [They're about] coordinating people's thinking about what they want to achieve with the rivers or wetlands on their farms". Catchment groups, Marc says, represent a mindset shift. 'It's not just 'what am I going to do on my farm, but how should I think about what I want to do on my farm in relation to what everyone in this catchment is going to do on their farm."

Ed Challies of the University of Canterbury has also extensively researched catchment groups. The Scroll asked him what makes a successful catchment group:

"It seems to work really well where you have a natural sub-catchment, where everyone in the community more or less knows each other, most of them are involved in the catchment group, or a large chunk of the landowners in that catchment are involved or on board, then you're more likely to get those outcomes," he said.

Until now catchment communities have not had a united voice. That changed in 2023, when a working group of catchment leaders from around New Zealand came together to develop a New Zealand-wide collaborative approach and form the Aotearoa New Zealand Catchment Collective. The collective has a steady membership base of 220 (of the approx. 250 catchment groups NZ wide) of which Upper Taieri Wai is one and represents over 6 million hectares of land in all corners of the country. The collective's goal is to make sure catchment groups are well-resourced, well-supported, and knowledge-rich.

Upper Taieri Wai is one of the oldest catchment groups in the country. It has successfully navigated the fraught arena of freshwater management for over 20 years and has established the Tiaki Maniototo project.

Now, Upper Taieri Wai is looking to build its next phase. We would like the community behind us, and with us.
Contact uppertaieriwai@gmail.com for more information.

TAIARI WAI RIVER FESTIVAL

The second annual Taiari Wai River Festival is nearly upon us! Perhaps the only music festival in New Zealand specifically geared around freshwater conservation.

We have a fantastic line up of music for you with some of the top bands in the South Island for your enjoyment.

Tess Liautaud

The music of Franco-American singer-songwriter Tess Liautaud can not be easily defined. Along with her band, Liautaud creates a sound steeped in classic folk'n'country rock'n'roll. This is music that will grow roots in your heart and lift you up, the way music is supposed to.

“”It is warm and giving, open and true, devoid of pretension, gentle and full of heart, It sounds beautiful and everything is in its right place. A special balm for jolting times.'' - Adam McGrath

Skin and Bone

Skin & Bone are a swing, string and sing unit from the gin-and-tonic end of the Cowboy Lounge. Skin & Bone are a five piece acoustic swing band from Ōtepoti, Dunedin. Formed relatively recently, they are nevertheless a product of some very longstanding musical friendships.

Difficult to pigeon- hole, a substantial portion of their repertoire is 1930’s style swing, and they are popular in their hometown as an energetic dance band who will always pack the dance floor. In addition, they have a sizable number of original tunes that tend toward acoustic rock, and contemporary folk music from Aotearoa.

Jessie Shanks

Having traversed the countryside for the last fifteen or so years in New Zealand’s hardest working band The Eastern, Jessie Shanks is a renowned guitar picking, banjo frailing, foot stomper with a sweet southern voice and a raft of songs built from years on the road.

Shanks has cultivated her own unique approach to roots music, performing haunting contemporary folk tunes steeped in time and place and woven from her countless travels.

Mads Harrop

Mads Harrop is a singer-songwriter, composer, musician, producer, and sound engineer based in Dunedin

Her songs are joyous and poignant and have garnered critical acclaim. Mads writes songs that are mostly about the challenges she faces, and ideas to do with Neurodiversity (she has autism, anxiety and Tourette’s Syndrome).

ART AND CONSERVATION

Recently, with the support of Otago Catchment Community and the Maniototo Community Trust, we were able to commission Dunedin street artist Bruce Mahalski to paint a couple of galaxiids on the wall of the ICL accountants building in Ranfurly.

As part of the job, we chatted with kids from St John’s School onsite, and then Bruce gave the art students at the Maniototo Area School a talk about street art.

For Bruce, art is a great way to promote conservation. ‘I think we all know that a picture can sometimes explain something better than a thousand words,” he says.

“I’m not very good at painting pretty pictures but I hope my drawings can help to building an awareness around environmental issues and perhaps even catalyse some much needed action to protect our precious biodiversity.”

FESTIVAL PROGRAMME, VENDORS AND SPONSORS

FESTIVAL FOOD VENDORS ..

Waipiata Hotel, Alchemy Alley (Fantail Kitchen), Staceys Wee Red Shed, Caro’s Real DF Ice Cream, Maniototo Area School

FESTIVAL PROGRAMME ..

Main Stage

12:30 pm Jessie Shanks
1:30 pm Mads Harrop
2:30 pm Skin and Bone
3:45 pm Tess Liautaud band

Speakers Stage

Guest speakers to be confirmed

(Please note these times are subject to change: Keep an eye on our website for latest timings)

Tiaki Maniototo would like to thank the sponsors that make it possible to hold our Taiari Wai River Festival