

# **Wētā Conservation Charitable Trust**

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Report**

**For the year ending 30 June 2025**



The year from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025 was our first full year as an incorporated trust. Most of the effort still went into setting up and planning. We did not submit any grant applications yet; during this financial year, we had no income and incurred no expenses.

Our second Trust meeting is scheduled online on 1 September 2025, 6.30pm

### **Branding and web design**

During the second semester of 2024, Otago Polytechnic students Jenna Peat, Jessica McGeorge, Lucas Reid, Max Challis and Sophie Broadley worked on the Wētā Conservation Charitable Trust's logo and branding as part of their ADT3 branding class project. The students were supervised by lecturers Taryn Ormsby and Denise Narciso.

We liked Sophie Broadley's logo design best and we decided to adopt it as our official logo – it is used here at the top of this document.

The students kindly gave us a vector file of the logo that can be processed in Adobe Illustrator. They also produced a very cute stop-motion animation movie, and a 3D model of the wētā made out of wood.

We did not make any progress on the design of our website during this financial year, but this is now top priority for the coming months.

### **PO BOX**

During early 2024, we had opened a PO BOX in Dunedin. Unfortunately, the post office that hosted the PO BOX closed down within the year. We have decided to discontinue the PO BOX due to the lack of facilities at a readily accessible location.

## Bibliography of New Zealand Orthoptera

We have started collating a comprehensive library on New Zealand Orthoptera on our Google Drive, fully referenced in Zotero. As of 30 June 2025, we have gathered over 400 titles and tagged these by species; there are many more still to be added. In the long run, it is our intention to make the catalogue publicly available to browse on our website. A citation only will be given for works subjected to copyright.

## Permits and Applications

### *Permits granted*

- Permit to undertake research on Christchurch City Council land at Kaitorete Spit. Issued by Christchurch City Council on 29 October 2024. Valid for one year starting 1 November 2024. With many thanks to Alison Evans for facilitating the process.
- Auckland Museum Research Loan Agreement EN2025-10. Issued by Auckland Museum on 25 June 2025. For destructive sampling of museum specimens – katydids of Kermadec Islands. With many thanks to Leilani Walker and Ruby Moore for facilitating the process.

### *Applications submitted*

- Research proposal to conduct a long-term mark-recapture study on the Nationally Endangered Southern Alps giant wētā *Deinacrida pluvialis*. Submitted to the Department of Conservation on 8 May 2025.

## Fieldwork

- Southern Alps giant wētā (*Deinacrida pluvialis*) searches in Temple Stream South Branch (Ōhau region) and on Price Range, Westland, December 2024 to February 2025.

### *Report (contains sensitive information):*

Hegg D. 2025. Surveys for the Southern Alps giant wētā *Deinacrida pluvialis*: Temple Stream and Price Range, Summer 2024/25. WCCT Field Report 2025–3; DOC-10363090. Wētā Conservation Charitable Trust, Dunedin, NZ. 19pp.

- Kaitorete Spit Reserve, ground cricket survey, 26 February 2025. Small crickets of supposed interest turned out to be regular *Bobilla* sp.

- Tiritiri Matangi Island, cave wētā collecting trip, 14 to 20 March 2025. Fresh specimens of *Talitropsis irregularis* and of *Neonetus* sp. were collected for the purpose of taxonomy.

*Report:*

Hegg D. 2025. A cave wētā collecting trip to Tiritiri Matangi Island: 14–20 March 2025. WCCT Field Report 2025–2; DOC-10363334. Wētā Conservation Charitable Trust, Dunedin, NZ. 19pp.

<https://wetaconservation.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/Hegg-2025-Tiritiri-Matangi-cave-weta.pdf>

- Snares Islands / Tini Heke, cave wētā collecting trip, 8 to 16 April 2025. Fresh specimens of *Insulanoplectron spinosum* were collected for the purpose of taxonomy. See more under *Science*.

*Report:*

Hegg D. 2025. A cave wētā collecting trip to Snares Islands / Tini Heke: 8–16 April 2025. WCCT Field Report 2025–1; DOC-10315510. Wētā Conservation Charitable Trust, Dunedin, NZ. 11pp. + appendix.

<https://wetaconservation.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/Hegg-2025-Snares-Islands-report-DOC-10315510.pdf>

- Expedition to Poor Knights Islands had been planned and scheduled for May 2025, but had to be cancelled due to inclement weather and rough seas, which would have made landing onto the islands impossible.
- *Macropathus* (cave wētā) collecting trips. Numerous locations all over the country, throughout the year.

## Meetings

- **Auckland Museum.** Examination of Orthoptera specimens from Kermadec Islands and various samples from Orthoptera collections in Auckland Museum; providing identification. Two visits: 28 November 2024 and 30 April 2025.
- **Auckland Zoo,** 28 March 2025. Meeting with Dave Laux, learning about wētāpunga captive breeding programme. Informal chat about the possibility of starting a captive breeding programme for the Foveaux Strait giant wētā (*Deinacrida carinata*).
- Meetings with **Te Rūnanga Nui o Te Aupōuri** to discuss our intention to apply for permits for entomological work on Manawatāwhi and on Rangitāhua. Danilo met with Niki Conrad in Te Kao (Far North) on 13 May 2025. Danilo and Maddy met with Maree Wiki in Whangaparāoa (Auckland) on 15 May 2025.

- Talk at **Auckland Branch of the New Zealand Entomological Society**, 15 May 2025: “*Pterapotrechus salomonoides* in New Zealand: a harmless naturalised cricket, or an ecological pest?”

## Conferences

Danilo and Maddy attended the 72<sup>nd</sup> conference of the Entomological Society of New Zealand in Christchurch, 28 to 30 August 2024.

Danilo gave a presentation in the Taxonomy and Systematics session: “Aotearoa’s small crickets: creating new problems while solving old ones.”

## Science

### *Published*

9 September 2024

Hegg D. 2024. Small crickets of New Zealand (Orthoptera: Grylloidea: Trigonidiidae and Mogoplistidae), with the description of two new genera and species. *European Journal of Taxonomy* 955: 1–87. <https://doi.org/10.5852/ejt.2024.955.2655>

10 December 2024

Hegg D., Morgan-Richards M. & Trewick S.A. 2024. Revision of the New Zealand cave wētā genus *Isoplectron* Hutton (Orthoptera: Rhaphidophoridae), with synonymy of *Petrotettix* Richards and *Setascutum* Richards, and the description of a new genus. *European Journal of Taxonomy* 971: 1–75. <https://doi.org/10.5852/ejt.2024.971.2761>

25 February 2025

Hegg D. 2025. An Australian raspy cricket established in New Zealand, *Pterapotrechus salomonoides* (Orthoptera, Gryllacrididae), with notes on ecology and first description of the male. *Journal of Orthoptera Research* 34(1): 77–94. <https://doi.org/10.3897/jor.34.134391>

### *In preparation*

Revision of the cave wētā genus *Insulanoplectron*

Report on the impacts of predator-exclusion fencing on the Tekapo ground wētā