



Hinewai Reserve – *A wilderness reborn*

Hinewai Reserve was established in 1987 with the purchase of 109 hectares of farmland near Akaroa by the Maurice White Native Forest Trust, with Hugh as the resident manager. Hugh's dream of returning it to native bush has been his on-going passion for nearly 30 years.

A thousand years ago, Banks Peninsula was almost completely forested, but by 1900, due to human settlement, less than one percent of the canopy cover remained, with around half of the bird species wiped out.

Hugh has used the extensive gorse cover to nurture native seedlings which then overtop and smother the exotic weed. Extensive control to remove mammalian intruders has resulted in the rapid return and proliferation of many native species including bellbirds, grey warblers, tomtits, pigeon and tui.

Over 20 publicly accessible walking tracks cross the reserve, including part of the Banks Peninsula Track.

The reserve area has grown over the years to 1,250 hectares of regenerating native forest and remnant old-growth forest. Hinewai now attracts tourists and biological researchers from around the globe.

Hugh Wilson

1967 Bachelor of Arts in English, UC

1971 Bachelor of Science in Botany, UC

Hugh is a world-renowned botanist, conservationist and cyclist.

Born in Timaru, Hugh moved to Christchurch with his family when he and his twin sister Hilary were 5. He attended Elmwood District School, where he began drawing birds and dreaming of the bush. He then attended St Andrews College, where he was Dux in 1962.

The following year Hugh taught in Sarawak with Volunteer Service Abroad before returning to Christchurch to attend UC, where he completed degrees in both arts and science.

Hugh decided to bypass further study, and conducted botanical surveys of the Aoraki Mount Cook region and then of Stewart Island / Rakiura, and then. This was followed in 1980s by a 1331 plot, five year botanical survey of Banks Peninsula,

culminating in a Protected Natural Areas Programme report for the Department of Conservation.

Since 1987 Hugh has managed Hinewai Reserve on Banks Peninsula, a privately owned nature reserve.

Hugh has written and illustrated over a dozen books, including field guides to the wild plants of Mount Cook National Park (1978, 1996) and Stewart Island (1982, 1994) and recently the richly illustrated Plant Life on Banks Peninsula (2013).

He was awarded the Loder Cup in 1987 for his work with New Zealand flora, followed in 1991 by the Linnaean Society of London Bloomer Medal for his contribution to botany. He is a research fellow of the Koiata Botanical Trust and Landcare Research - Manaaki Whenua, and a director of the Banks Peninsula Track Company.

