

Distribution, trapping efficiencies and feeding trials for Kekewai, the native freshwater crayfish (*Paranephrops zealandicus*) in central Canterbury

Date: Thursday 29 September 2016

Time: 2.30pm – 3.30pm

Location: Room 208, Level 2, Te Ao Marama Building

Presenter: **Channell Thoms**

Abstract:

Freshwater crayfish are a taonga species of New Zealand waterways that are highly valued as mahinga kai by many local iwi. Crayfish can also be an important keystone species by acting as bioengineers that create habitats for other species as well as contributing to the maintenance of stream health. Crayfish are also important in stream food webs, as both grazers and predators that help to shape benthic communities as well as being prey species for larger aquatic animals. My research focused on the native South Island crayfish (Kekewai, *Paranephrops zealandicus*) and was comprised of three components; field surveys to determine the occurrence of crayfish in Canterbury streams, testing of alternative sampling techniques and investigating feeding. Comparisons of capture techniques included active and passive methods and also examined the use of both contemporary trapping and traditional tau-kōura. Results from these studies can be used to inform management and restoration projects.

Biography:

Channell has just completed her Master's thesis on freshwater crayfish. She is a descendant of Ngāi Tahu from Ngāti Kuri hapu with whakapapa to Maungamanu. Channell is passionate about mahinga kai species and is interested in investigating management strategies that would ensure sustainability of freshwater resources.