




Course 3 – The Rewilding of Canterbury

Course Organiser: Jan Bierman

 A portrait of Dr Paul Scofield, a man with long hair and a beard, wearing a light-colored jacket, holding a small white dog. He is outdoors with a blue sky and some greenery in the background.	<p>5 May: Dr Paul Scofield, Kairauhi Matua/Senior Curator of Natural History, Canterbury Museum</p> <p>From Bones to Engineering: Rethinking the Moa</p> <p>The Moa De-extinction Project explores the scientific, cultural, and ecological possibilities of bringing one of Aotearoa’s most iconic extinct birds back to life. Combining ancient DNA research, modern genomic tools, and collaboration with iwi and conservation experts, the project investigates what we can learn about moa biology, how their traits might be reconstructed, and what role such work could play in understanding past ecosystems. This research offers new insights into biodiversity, extinction processes, and the future of conservation science in New Zealand.</p>
 A portrait of Sara Templeton, a woman with dark, wavy hair, wearing a blue blazer over a white top and a necklace with a green pendant. She is smiling and looking directly at the camera.	<p>12 May: Sara Templeton, Environmental Advocate, Urbanist and former Christchurch City Councillor</p> <p>Rewilding the City: The Importance of Nature in Urban Spaces</p> <p>An overview of why nature is important in Ōtautahi, both for wellbeing and for our infrastructure, where we’re at and a vision for how we could be.</p>
 A portrait of Toby Chapman, a man with short blonde hair, wearing a light blue button-down shirt. He is smiling and standing in front of a large green indoor plant.	<p>19 May: Toby Chapman, Urban Forest Manager, Christchurch City Council</p> <p>Urban Forest Plan</p> <p>The Christchurch City Council’s Urban Forest Plan was adopted in 2023 and had a focus on increasing tree coverage across the city. Since its adoption, the first major project as part of its implementation has been the Parks Urban Forest Tree Planting project. The project includes an initial analysis of our parks to look for available space for new trees while retaining their recreational values.</p>



26 May: Greg Stanley, Team Leader Braided River Revival, Environment Canterbury (ECAN)

Landscape scale restoration and flood protection enhancement

A summary of the work of the Braided River Revival team with a focus on how sites for restoration work are selected and how wild function is prioritised. A look at how ECAN are realising both erosion control outcomes and habitat enhancement in Canterbury Riverbeds.



2 June: Hugh Eaton, Banks Peninsular Conservation Trust (BPCT)

The Re-cloaking of Banks Peninsula: Letting Nature Lead

Te Pātaka o Rākohaitū / Banks Peninsula is an extraordinary geological region and a biodiversity treasure for Christchurch and Canterbury. The Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust (BPCT) was established in 2001 as a non-profit organisation dedicated to working with landowners, agencies, sponsors, and the wider community. Their mission is to conserve and enhance indigenous biodiversity while promoting sustainable land management across the peninsula. They want to inspire communities to connect to their environment and take meaningful action to protect and restore it.

Hospitality:

Thanks to Yvonne Ekdahl for coordinating morning tea/coffee/biscuits and to Denise Falconer, Jan Veronese, Donna Aitkin and Jane Ross for their assistance.

Visitors are welcome: \$5 per session in cash. Visitors must sign the register at the membership desk.

Cell phone use during presentations: Members are reminded that, while phones can be used to take notes during presentations, they should not take photos of the presenter or the slides presented as the distribution of this material requires the consent of presenters. All phones should be set to silent.

Interest groups:

U3A Christchurch Central has two interest groups - the **Walking Group** and the **Art Interest Group**. For the Walking group contact Sue Allard sue.allard@xtra.co.nz, and for the Art Interest Group contact Anne McMurtrie, annemcmurtrie@xtra.co.nz, 027 537 5128.

The U3A Art Interest Group will meet at 10:30 am on Friday 17 April at the Ashburton Art Gallery to see the Zonta Art Awards. Car-pooling is encouraged. This exhibition showcases over 84 entries from Canterbury female artists for the Premier or Young Generation Awards. Contact Anne to register interest. For further information see:

<https://ashburtonartgallery.org.nz/exhibition/zonta-ashburton-womens-art-award-2026/>

New members: In the first two months of our 2026 Programme we have welcomed 20 new members. Please continue to look out for them (the yellow dot on their nametag) and get to know a bit about them. Currently our waitlist has 53 people on it, down from 86 last August.