

# 6. People and the forest

In 50 years the old pine plantation should be covered in native forest.



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The hill behind the Visitors' Centre was planted in pines in the 1970s. On 1 June 2001, the harvesting of the pine trees began. This will take 8 years to complete. The area will be left to regenerate. The process will be:

Gorse is an introduced weed but it has proved to be a useful nursery plant for native species. It provides shade, ground cover and nitrogen to enrich the soil. As the trees grow through the gorse and block the light, the gorse will die.

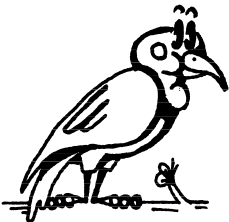
First year: bare ground.

Next 10 years: gorse cover.

Gradually native species will grow through the gorse. To improve the look of the area, to provide food for birds and to reduce the risk of gorse fires, people are giving nature a helping hand. A revegetation programme is planned for some areas.

An area near the visitor centre has been left to regenerate on its own.

- Compare this area of natural regeneration with the planned revegetation.
- Visualise how the bare hillside will look in 20 years time? in 60 years time? Sketch your ideas.



Think about the conditions that different plants prefer.

- Where will the beech forest be? Where are the podocarps such as kahikatea, matai, miro and rimu growing? What areas will the ferns prefer?
- How are people helping the new forest to grow? Think about some of the actions that will be included in a revegetation plan. Where the seeds will be collected from, how/where will the plants be prepared for planting on the hillside, how they can be cared for in dry summers, how will they encourage people to help them with their project? Think about all the seeds that will have fallen from the pine trees. What will happen to them? Will small pine plants need to be weeded out?
- Look in the Visitor Centre for photos and information about how people are helping the new forest to grow.