

# Weta motels



Using hollowed-out untreated wooden blocks called 'weta motels' (above) it is possible to simulate the cavities found in mature trees that are used by weta and other invertebrates. Cave or tree weta as well as other groups such as endemic spiders and leaf-vein slugs commonly colonise and sometimes breed in the refuges. Entrance holes should be a maximum of 16 mm diameter to keep predators such as mice out.

# Other common motel occupants



**Native leaf-vein slug**



**Cave weta**



**Spider with egg sac  
& spiderlings**



***Artystona* species**

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**Lincoln  
University**  
Te Whare Wānaka o Aoraki

# Weta Watchers of Banks Peninsula, Canterbury



A group of willing landowners are helping Lincoln University researchers to put motels on their land to provide extra predator-proof accommodation for tree weta. This also provides a method to determine the presence or absence of two species on Banks Peninsula.

# The two tree weta species found on Banks Peninsula, Canterbury

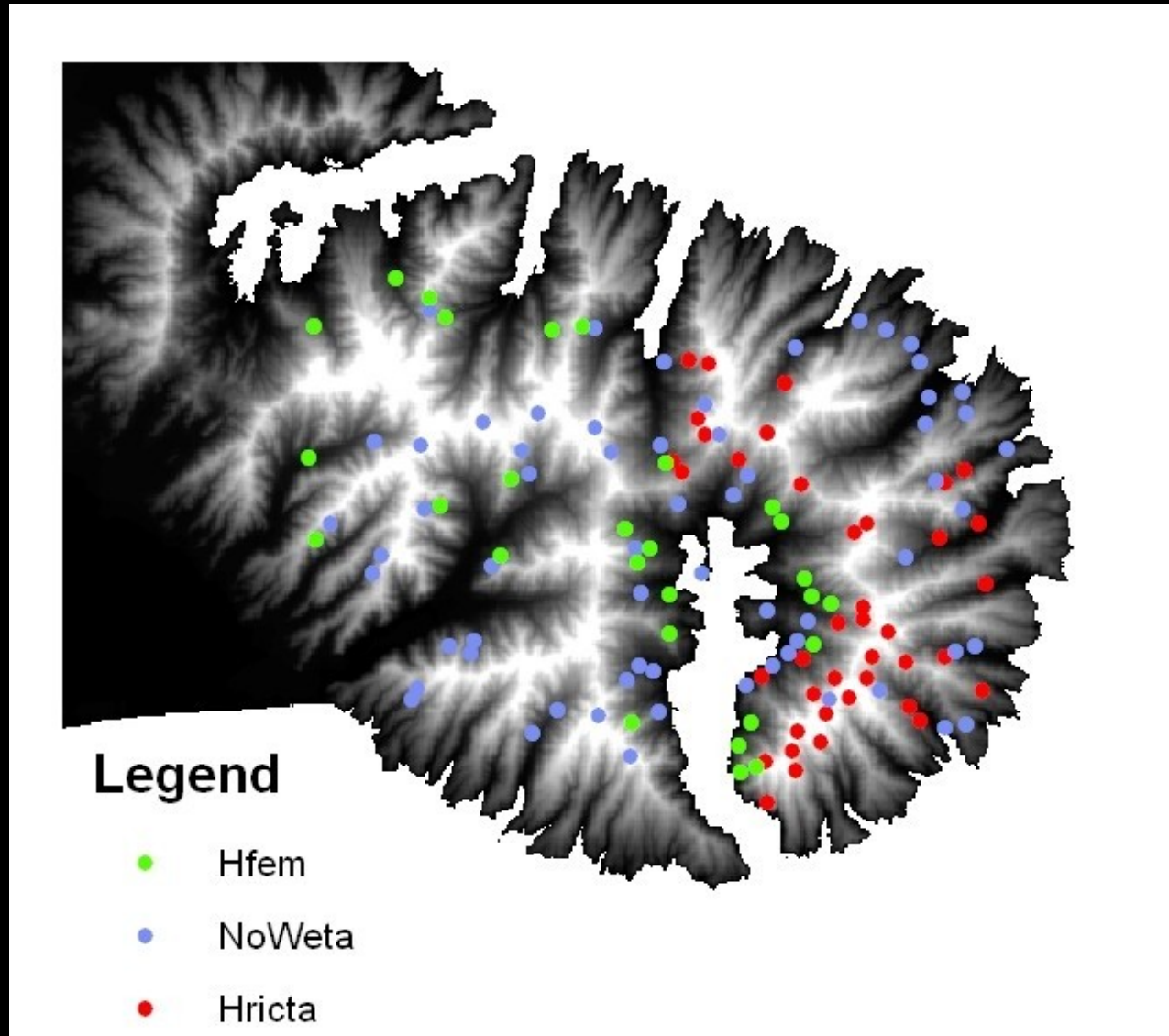


*Hemideina femorata* (male)  
Canterbury tree weta



*Hemideina ricta* (female)  
Banks Peninsula tree weta

# Banks Peninsula tree weta distribution (Townsend *et al.* 1997)



*H. femorata*

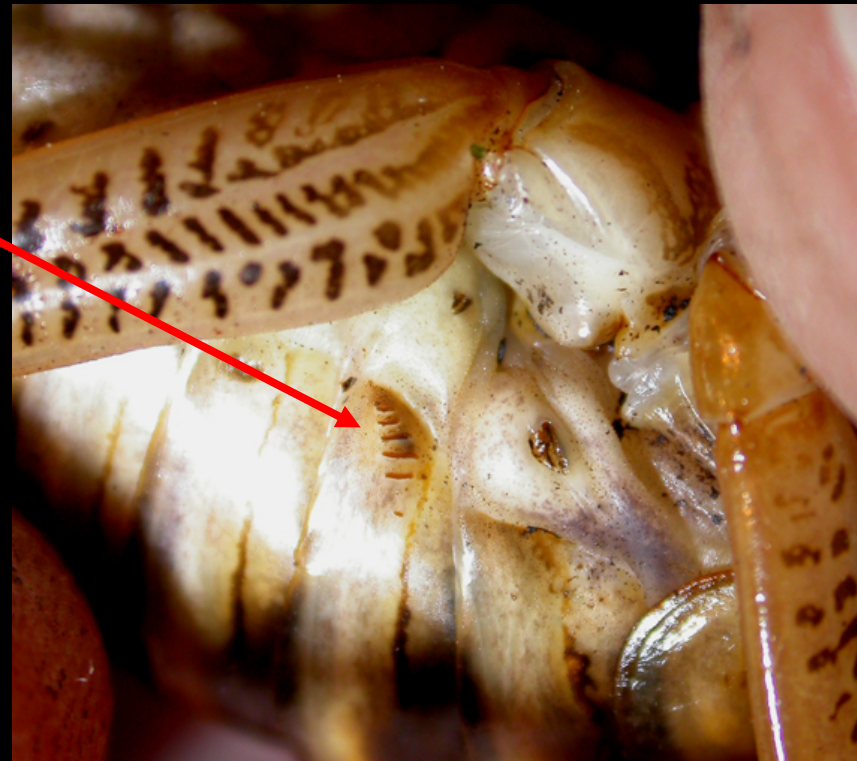


*H. ricta*

# Anatomical differences between the Banks Peninsula tree weta species

**Stridulatory ridges**  
(sum of left & right)

- *H. ricta* > 20
- *H. femorata* < 16



# Habitat of Banks Peninsula

## *Hemideina* spp.

(Townsend *et al.* 1997)

	<i>H. ricta</i>	<i>H. femorata</i>
<b>Altitude:</b>	97% > 400 m	77% < 400 m

### **Plant host/habitat:**

• kanuka	19%	94%
• lacebark	20%	1%
• mahoe	8%	1%
• logs	26%	1%
• old fence posts	16%	0%
• rocks	4%	0%

# How to conserve the Banks Peninsula tree weta

- retain kanuka and other old remnant bush patches (fence if possible)
- retain old totara & broadleaf fence posts and logs
- protect rock stacks from disturbance
- trap for main predators e.g. possums, hedgehogs, rats



# References on weta motel work

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