

# INTERVIEW THE AUTHOR

Raymund Huber & Sandra Severgnini

KCCers get to know the being behind *Tree Beings*.



## Cameron's questions:

**Q:** Who is your favourite New Zealand eco-hero?

**A:** I don't have ONE hero, but lots: all of the volunteers who come week after week and year after year to plant trees in their communities are my favourite heroes. In my community, a group called Save The Otago Peninsula has been planting for decades, and most of the trees survive because they look after them after planting. The couple who organize the planting, Lala and Ian Frazer, are real eco-heroes.

**Q:** Was there an eco-hero who inspired you when you were young?

**A:** When I was about eight years old, there was a man called David Attenborough. My neighbour made one of the first colour TV sets in New Zealand, so we would watch TV at their house. The show "Our World" with David Attenborough was my first introduction to science and learning about nature.

**Q:** What did he inspire you to do?

**A:** He inspired me to be interested in plants and insects when I went to university. When I got older and became a writer, I loved writing about those things.

**Q:** Can you tell me about a tree being from when you were young?

**A:** When I was a kid, I used to love climbing trees and making tree houses. There was a forest near my house in Christchurch. After school, I would play in the tree house then go to the children's library, which was on the edge of the forest. At the library, I discovered the book called *The Lorax*! The Lorax was my favourite Tree Being, because he spoke for the trees!

**Tree Beings by Raymond Huber and Sandra Severgnini**

**A review by Cameron Guest, age 8.**

5 out of 5 stars – Inspiring. ★★★★★

This book is like a waka huia with different treasures inside.

I liked *Tree beings* as the book was broken down into short stories about people that helped to look after trees. My favourite story was about Felix the Trillion Tree kid because he is the same age as me and he likes planting trees and saving the world. I also like the story about the Mother of Trees – she was very brave. I live next to Whakarewarewa Forest and have been trapping possums to help save trees too.

I also enjoyed that at the end of the stories it told me other things I could find out or do. I want to try and get a tree to paint me a picture.

I also really liked the pictures, especially the front cover, as I liked finding the animals. I keep looking in case I can find more. I found the picture of the mangrove swamp really cool as I liked the different sea creatures.

After reading this book, I want to plant more trees and keep trapping possums. I want to encourage my friends to do this too.



Cameron with one of his favorite Tree Beings (The winky faced tree)

## Skylar's questions:

**Q:** What inspired you to write this book?

**A:** Lots of things. I was looking for a new idea for a book and then came across a man called Richard St. Barbe Baker. I really loved reading the many books he wrote. Richard inspired people to plant trillions of trees all around the world! He helped save the redwood trees, started a global tree-planting organisation, and he would ride around New Zealand on horseback educating people about trees. Richard was the first Tree Being I wrote about and who inspired me to write more stories.

**Q:** Was there anything in particular you found interesting as you were putting this book together?

**A:** The most interesting thing was about how trees communicate. The kind of internet that they have is incredible. Food and water and messages are passed underground through fungal hyphae. They may send a message that is a warning about insects attacking ... it's like trees talking to each other! The fungi also benefit as well. I also learned that trees do heaps and heaps of things for the world. Giving homes, taking in carbon, giving off oxygen, recycling water, cleaning the air, growing food for humans! They are fun as well. We have a lot to thank them for.

**Q:** What is your favourite tree and why?

**A:** The beech tree! I live in the South Island, so most of the native forests are beech. It always makes me feel good – like forest bathing. They are my favorite to walk in and my favorite trees overall.

**Q:** What would be your advice be to protect our trees for future generations?

**A:** 1) Planting trees and 2) protecting trees. Plant trees wherever you live. Also, put the right tree in the right place!!! Help protect native forests wherever you are. There are still some forests that aren't owned by the government so those still need to be protected! 3) Being careful what we buy, like palm oil, which contributes to cutting down of rainforests.

**Tree Beings by Raymond Huber and Sandra Severgnini**

**A review by Skylar, age 9.**

Did you know that trees send messages to each other through an underground web of fungi? This is only one of the many things I learnt from reading *Tree Beings*. If you love nature and trees, this is the book for you! I found *Tree Beings* an interesting read, where you can discover the power of trees within the pages. The book is separated into four different sections: trees give life to the planet, trees can help us fight climate change, trees are like beings, and trees need our help and protection.

The book features stories of many inspirational people (and one special dog!). Through telling their unique stories, they help us to understand the importance of trees on planet Earth. I particularly enjoyed reading about Julia Butterfly Hill. Julia was staying in California, near a forest of redwood trees. When she heard about loggers cutting down the redwoods, she was desperate to save them. Julia joined a protest group who had forest names, so she called herself "Butterfly". The protest group climbed trees to stop them being cut down. Julia named her tree "Luna", which means "moon" in Spanish. Julia stayed up in Luna for 738 days in order to save the trees from being destroyed!

I reread this book many times, and it could become a firm favourite in your household!



**WIN A COPY!**

If you'd like to win a copy of this cool book, email us with some of your favorite tree facts to [kcc@forestandbird.org.nz](mailto:kcc@forestandbird.org.nz).

