

Flight



ISSUE 138 - January 2009





wetland care
NEW ZEALAND

Our business is to harness community, business and government resources to restore and develop lost wetland areas within New Zealand.

Wetland Care members recognise that wetlands are vital to the wellbeing of the environment, acting as huge ecological sponges by soaking up pollutants and filtering water before it reaches streams, rivers, lakes, aquifers and the sea.

Our initiatives focus on matters as far-reaching as groundwater replenishment, flood control, nutrient and contaminant management and climate change – all critical factors for the conservation of freshwater and saltwater wetlands and marshes.

We want to preserve and conserve the flora and fauna of our most endangered ecosystem so that vibrant wetlands are our legacy to future generations.

Funding for projects comes from the Waterfowl and Wetlands Trust which was established by Ducks Unlimited New Zealand Inc in 1991, as well as membership, donations and corporate memberships such as that from Banrock Station Wines.

Central to Wetland Care New Zealand's mission is forming partnerships with people and organisations with similar aims. An example is Banrock Station Wines who place the Wetland Care New Zealand logo on their wine bottles distributed in New Zealand. In return, Banrock contribute a fee, which is based on each bottle sold, to Wetland Care New Zealand.

Money from this partnership has been given to wetland conservation projects done by, among others:

- Tutukaka Landcare Coalition
- Tawharanui Open Sanctuary Society Inc.
- Ducks Unlimited Operation Pateke
- Port Charles release 2005 at Coromandel
- Henley Trust, Masterton
- Karori Wildlife Sanctuary, Wellington
- Kitchener Park, Feilding
- Manawatu Estuary Trust, Foxton
- Mangaone Wetland, Raetihi
- Masterton Intermediate School, Masterton
- Steyning Trust, Hawkes Bay
- Travis Wetland Trust, Christchurch
- Wairio Wetland, South Wairarapa
- Wetland Trust New Zealand, Rangiriri
- Waitakere Branch of Forest and Bird, West Auckland
- Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust, Dunedin
- Cape Kidnappers pateke release, 2008

For further information, please contact:
William Abel - Director, Wetland Care
New Zealand, phone 06-362 6675
PO Box 281 Levin.

Manawatu Chapter Sporting Clay Shoot

The annual 100 target shoot will be held on 29 March 2009 (5th Sunday) at the Candy property, 243 Hopelands Road Woodville starting around 09:00.

This event is kindly sponsored by Moose's Sports of Palmerston North and a Browning shotgun will be the major prize.

AUSTRALIAN SHELDUCK available

Following a very successful breeding season, Wellington Zoo is happy to make available 13 young Australian shelduck.

The birds are all related so ideally should be paired to unrelated birds. Currently waiting on DNA sexing results (as at early December 2008)

Price \$150 the pair - Contact Simon Eyre on 04 8030767 or simon.eyre@wellingtonzoo.com



The Australian Shelduck is a large dark-plumaged duck weighing from 1.3 to 1.5 kg, and standing 55 to 73 cm tall. Males are noticeably larger than females. Their heads, backs, bellies, and tails are blackish with green metallic highlights. There is a narrow white neck band separating the black head from the brown breast. The female's breast feathers are a rich chestnut, the male's are a paler cinnamon. The colorful wings have black primaries, metallic green secondaries, chestnut tertials, and white upper and under wing coverts. Females have rings of white feathers around the eye and the base of the bill. Juvenile birds are duller overall in coloration with some white or grey tips on body feathers. Both sexes produce a strange assortment of goose-like honks, grunts, and whistles. The female's vocalizations are higher in pitch.

Waterfowl and Wetlands



Videos \$30
DVDs \$39
(inc GST)
+ \$5 for Courier

A New Zealand Odyssey

"Waterfowl and Wetlands - A New Zealand Odyssey" is a 75-minute programme that illustrates the value of wetlands, the waterfowl that depend upon them and the efforts being made to reclaim the country's rapidly shrinking wetland areas.

New Zealand is home to some of the world's rarest waterfowl as well as the more common introduced species. Each one is shown in detail. There is information on the various types of wetland and their management, waterfowl predators, the conservation value of hunters and also the Ramsar sites of ecological importance.

DVD indexing takes you directly to any waterfowl species, wetland type, Ramsar site and other subjects.

ORDER FROM:
Scientific and Wildlife Films
11 Hanover Street, Wadestown,
Wellington, New Zealand

Insight

The recent upheaval in the world economy caused me to think about Ducks Unlimited's financial position at the moment.

While it is true we are reasonable comfortable at the moment the real strength of any organisation is in its membership.

The more members you have and the more active they are the better the organisation.

The other point to remember is that corporate sponsorship is more difficult to procure in this economic climate.

So the message is clear - the more members we can bring in, the stronger we will be and the more conservation work we can do.

Merry Christmas everyone.

Ross Cottle

President



Our Mission

To deliver effective wetland restoration, development, research, education and advocacy;

While supporting the preservation of threatened waterfowl and the ethical and sustainable use of wetlands

Flight is published by:

Ducks Unlimited New Zealand Inc.

P.O. Box 9795,

Newmarket, Auckland 1149, New Zealand.

ISSN 1173-2776

Advertising in Flight magazine per issue (ex GST)
Full colour back cover \$400, Full colour page inside \$350,
Full colour half page inside \$200, Black and white full page \$300,
Black and white half page \$180, Black and white 1/4 page \$90.

All to be produced camera-ready.

Discount for long-term ads - ask Editor

Waterfowl adverts are free to members. Please contact the Editor with any suggestions or to book a space.

Contributions from members and other readers, including photographs, are welcome.

Deadline for all copy and illustrations, Flight 139:

15 February 2009

Editing & Production:

Gail Isaac

129 Grant Rd, Thorndon

Wellington 6011 tel: (04) 499 9747 or

47 Cross's Line, RD, Greytown 5794 tel: (06) 304 8034

or cell 027 3222 944

email: gail.isaac@xtra.co.nz or gail.isaac@gmail.com

Printing:

Lamb-Peters Print,

106A Main Street,

Greytown

Wairarapa

CONTENTS

Shelduck available	2
Manawatu Chapter shoot notice	2
Insight	3
Obituary Noel Singer	4
Raffle results	4
DUNZ Conference 2009 Manawatu preview	4
Canterbury environmental groups	5
Manawatu attractions	5
Photos swan at Huritini	6
Photos Blue Duck Lodges	6
I want/need a swan - what do I do?	7
Maddi the black lab trained for pateke	7
Wairarapa clay bird shoot report	8
Manawatu chapter dinner report	9
Pateke at Palmerston North's Esplanade	10
Shelduck bred at Wellington Zoo	10
Basil George, DUNZ member, from Wales	12
Pateke report from Tuhua	12
Taumata Lagoon water level improvement	13
Wairarapa Wairoa Block alder control involvement	14
Blue Duck Lodges	15
Pateke at Palmerston North's Esplanade	10
Shelduck bred at Wellington Zoo	10
Basil George, DUNZ member, from Wales	12
Pateke report from Tuhua	12
Taumata Lagoon water level improvement	13
Wairarapa Wairoa Block alder control involvement	14
Blue Duck Lodges	15

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Patrons

Lady Isaac, QSM Christchurch

Jim Campbell Masterton

President

Ross Cottle Masterton (06) 378 7408

Chairman

Neil Candy Palmerston North (06) 376 4448

Vice-president

Ossie Latham Feilding 0274 433 033
(text only)

Treasurer

John Bishop Cambridge (07) 823 7070

Directors

William Abel Levin (06) 362 6675

David Smith Auckland (09) 298 4719

Jim Law South Wairarapa (06) 307 7855

John Dermer Feilding (06) 328 9740

Kevin Campbell Napier (06) 835 7218

Cover photo:

Swan family at Huritini.

Photo courtesy of William Abel.



Obituary

Noel Singer - February 1939 - July 2008

A salute, written by Ray Hayward

Sadly on 28th July 2008 local Ducks Unlimited member Noel Singer passed away.

Noel was a keen DU member who was a current member of the Waikato Chapter committee (a position he held for many years). Noel always attended the chapter working bees and fundraising events and with his wife Marie they both worked very hard for DU and our Chapter events.

Although Noel and Marie did not attend the last AGM in the Hawke's Bay they had for many years attended this fundraising dinner. I am sure there will be many members who are saddened by his passing.

Noel loved playing Santa and always dressed up for the kids at the DU Christmas barbecue; he really enjoyed that role, but as the years went by he had to be more careful so his grand kids didn't recognise him! Every Christmas he would have a list of children he would ring and would entertain them, playing his role as Santa.

One of Noel's other hobbies outside of bird-breeding was growing oak trees and these were often sold in the various silent auctions held. He was also very keen duck-shooter and trout fisherman; he loved the outdoors. I recall one season on a closing day celebration on a lake near Hamilton when Noel opened the rum bottle and threw the cap into the lake; during the next summer when we were out on the same lake doing a bit of maintenance there was the



Photo taken in 1999 shows from left Noel Singer with Ray Hayward's old labrador. The late DU stalwart Jack Worth beside Noel, is pictured with his little grandson.

cap, sitting up proudly in the mud. We all had a great laugh about how it got there and reminisced about the afternoon of joking around we had.

His family and grandkids were his first love but this was closely followed by the Warriors Rugby League team. He was a huge rugby league fan (having played for many years himself) and he would have been so proud of them this season nearly making the finals. The family had planned a trip to the NRL grand final and as a sign of respect to Noel they still completed the journey.

The Waikato Chapter has farewelled a valued

Ray Hayward
Waikato Chapter



Raffle Results

Ducks Unlimited NZ Raffle 2008

Once again the Raffle proved popular this year and returned a net profit of about \$6000 for DU.

My sincere thanks go to Howard Egan for organising and running the raffle and also Joyce Brooks for once again selling in excess of 70 books.

Howard was unable to finish off the work on the raffle due to ill health and we wish him a speedy recovery.

Ross Cottle

1st Ticket No	1543
2 nd Ticket No	3541
3 rd Ticket No	3497
4 th " "	3829
5 th " "	1579
6 th " "	2316
7 th " "	2980
8 th " "	1158

OUR Conference

2009 Annual DU Conference in Palmerston North Preview -

Manawatu Chapter president Neil Candy has booked the Kingsgate Hotel in Palmerston North for the weekend Friday 24 to Sunday 26 July 2009.

Special room rate of \$123 incl GST and breakfast. These rooms are in the tower block. Also available are outside rooms for \$109 incl GST and breakfast.

At this stage 40 rooms of the tower block have been reserved, but if people wish some outside rooms can also be reserved. There are 151 rooms at the Kingsgate Hotel.

The conference room is about 100m from the hotel, but the Dinner/Auction will be held at the Awapuni Function Centre (Awapuni Racecourse) about 5km away - see photos from the Manawatu Chapter Dinner on page 10.

Conference manager is Dale Shannon—ph 06 350-0707/ fax 06-356-8604

e-mail:

Dale.Shannon@millenniumhotels.co.nz

Dairying and environmental groups say more needs to be done in Canterbury

Both the dairy industry and environmental groups acknowledge the findings of the Environment Canterbury report on disposal of dairy shed effluent and say much more action is needed from farmers, industry bodies and the regional council.

The report is for the 2007/08 dairying season, which ended on 31 May 2008.

"Compliance with regional council regulations around disposal of farm dairy effluent is a bottom line for the industry. Although overall compliance in Canterbury has increased, the fact that the report shows no real progress in reducing levels of non-compliance over the last five seasons is a major concern for us," said DairyNZ Chief Executive Dr Tim Mackle.

Fish and Game's Nelson Marlborough Manager Neil Deans said, "The report says there are a number of farms that are performing very well, but 37 per cent of those farms that were identified as significantly non-compliant still hadn't addressed their issues by the end of the season (7.4% of all dairy farms). Compliance with consents is a fundamental requirement to conduct any business, and the fact that non-compliance problems are being identified but some farmers aren't remedying those problems is of major concern and exposed shortcomings in current processes."

"Rates of serious non-compliance have increased since last year and this is of real concern to Forest & Bird. At a meeting held at Environment Canterbury last week, there was agreement that all groups should be working together to achieve improvements in the region's water quality," Forest & Bird Advocacy manager, Kevin Hackwell said.

Dr Mackle said the dairy industry, along with Fish and Game and the Forest & Bird, supports Environment Canterbury's plan to make greater use of enforcement tools and increase monitoring in its aim to achieve full compliance.

"It's good to see Environment Canterbury acknowledging the work done by the dairy industry to help farmers achieve compliance, and the report says results from this work have not yet been measured by the Council," he said.

"The industry is working hard with farmers to help them improve their infrastructure and management techniques. This includes contacting those who had compliance issues and providing information and on-farm assistance. Significant non-compliers had either agricultural engineering support or help from a Fonterra sustainable dairying advisor."

Dr Mackle said the full results of this work will not be reported on until this time next year. "In fact, we are actually increasing activity, with Fonterra hiring another sustainable dairying advisor for the region and the rolling out the DairyNZ Farm Enviro Walk, which helps farmers identify potential problem areas."

"There are some encouraging trends emerging, including the reduction in the incidence of major effluent ponding, which shows farm staff are aware of the need to check this. Plus the report notes that when compared nationally, Canterbury still has a low level of direct discharge to surface water occurring."

He said ponding is clearly the main issue and the dairy industry is working closely with scientists and service providers to deliver technology, systems and solutions to resolve this.

Neil Deans said the environmental groups are particularly concerned about water quality. "This report doesn't cover water quality and we look forward to working with the dairy sector, farmer organisations, and Environment Canterbury to deal with any issues identified in the regional State of the Environment report to be issued in December."

"Environmental groups and the dairy sector must find enduring solutions to ensure that dairy farming is environmentally sustainable. It's in all of our best interests to work together on this," he said.

This is a joint statement which represents the views of DairyNZ, Fish and Game, Fonterra, Forest & Bird and Synlait.

Media contacts: Sarah Fraser

GM Communication & Marketing, DairyNZ. Tel: 07 858 3835 or 021 609 703



Black swans on Lake Ellesmere - photo courtesy William Abel

The Manawatu - some useful facts

In only a few places in the world does a river pass through a dividing range and the Manawatu Gorge is one of them. The steep bush-clad hills of this spectacular Gorge are only 20 minutes' drive from Palmerston North. The reserve straddles both sides of the Manawatu River and SH3.

The Manawatu Gorge and Scenic Reserve form a link between the Manawatu province on the western side of the lower North Island and the northern Wairarapa province on the eastern side.

The Manawatu Gorge Scenic Reserve is approximately 12km (twelve) from Palmerston North. Drive north-east on SH3 to the carpark at the beginning of the Manawatu Gorge.

The formation of the Tararua and Ruahine ranges began about 1.5 million years ago. The rising of the greywacke ranges combined with erosion by the river has formed the steep gorges which exist today.

In the past the gorge was a formidable barrier to west-east travel. Known as Te-Apiti, the gorge was travelled by Maori who would haul their canoes upstream through the rapids.

Beginning as a surveyor's line, by 1872 a 'road' existed but was a perilous trip for coaches. Travellers had to cross the river by punt or take an aerial trip using a cageway, pulley and wire system suspended high above the river.

The railway through the gorge was contracted for in 1886. Men worked in large gangs shovelling metal winched up from the river. The line was completed in 1891 and the first train over it carried 1500 passengers in 18 double carriages.

Today the Manawatu Gorge Scenic Reserve and surrounds is part of an inter-agency biodiversity project that will see DoC, Horizons Regional Council, Palmerston North City Council, Rangitaane, Tararua District Council, On Track, Transit and Ashhurst Action Group work together to protect the native flora and fauna of this special area.

There are several different volunteer opportunities available to the public in this area.

The Manawatu Estuary at the mouth of the Manawatu River, located on the west coast next to the settlement of Foxton Beach is a Wetland of International Importance. Horizons Regional Council, Horowhenua District Council and the Department of Conservation work together to manage this area. A community conservation group, the Manawatu Estuary Trust, play a significant part in looking after and advising on the management of this area. They are currently involved with raising funds for a Visitor Centre at the estuary.

To get there, turn off SH1 at Foxton and head to the small settlement of Foxton Beach. Walking access to the estuary is off Holben Parade where cars can be parked by a small picnic shelter or alternatively cars can be driven down a sandy track past the old boat club to the estuary flats.

Features

The estuary has one of the most diverse ranges of birds to be seen at any one place in New Zealand. A total of 93 species have been identified at the estuary. It is a significant area of salt marsh and mudflat and a prized feeding ground for many birds including the migratory Eastern bar-tailed godwit.

The estuary is also a permanent home to 13 species of birds, six species of fish and four plant species, all of which are threatened. It regularly supports about one percent of the world population of wrybills.

In 2005 the Manawatu Estuary Trust were successful with their application to obtain Ramsar status for the Manawatu Estuary.



Swan family in spring - Photos courtesy William Abel from his own wetlands, Huritini.



BLUE DUCK LODGES



Dan Steele and friend



Interior of a Blue Duck Lodge with accommodation for up to eight people
(Photos courtesy Dan Steele)



Ecowarriors stoat-trapping



Part of the Whakahoro conservation project involves preserving the history of the last buildings of the failed 'Bridge to nowhere' settlement. Tramping tracks have been put in to explore these.

Bridge to Nowhere built during the depression for cars, with only dirt tracks either side now used as a trumper's trail



I am a member of DUNZ and I want/need a swan – what do I do?

Ducks Unlimited New Zealand runs a captive-management scheme for Royal, or mute swan which is the white one, the heaviest bird of the swan family – almost twice the weight of a black swan. Mute swan were introduced to this country in the 1860s but the species is still restricted to ornamental waters and needs the intervention of DUNZ to keep them at a viable population level – especially due to an ongoing decline in numbers.

Funds received as donations from recipients of swan, are returned to the development of wetlands and waterfowl habitat, as well as the operation of our endangered bird programmes.

There can be issues – for instance mute swan can be difficult to manage as they can be aggressive to other birds, mainly at breeding time, and can be fickle in their feeding habits. Their ages need to be matched carefully and they do not mature sexually until they are approximately three years old. They must have clean, non-mouldy food on hand at all times, and they eat small amounts at frequent intervals. So a feeder is necessary which can provide food for them which cannot be reached by other ducks or waterfowl. DUNZ can provide a simple but suitable feeder plan if required.

Other problems can be worm infestation and botulism in hot and stagnant ponds. But they are beautiful and they develop unique personalities. They can live up to and over 25 years.

Birds placed by DUNZ are pinioned at the wing joint at the least stressful stage of their life – under four days old when they have no nerves or blood vessels present in the wings to cause any problems. This removes their ability to fly away and protects them from crashing into roads, power lines - the usual dangers a large flying bird can face!

As only DUNZ members can receive these swans from us, it is understood that they participate in the spirit of the breeding programme and make available to the program, progeny from the breeding pairs. DUNZ takes an active interest in the health and welfare of their mute swan, and swan movements must be accompanied by transfer permits from DOC.

The DUNZ Coordinator is William Abel whose phone details are on page 2.



Blue Duck Lodge and Whio Lodge

At Blue Duck Lodge and Whio Lodge you are only steps away from countless activities and surrounded by the natural beauty of the Whakahoro Valley. Both lodges offer guests up-market accommodation in a secluded bush setting.

The Blue Duck Lodge Group is involved in several conservation projects, Blue Duck preservation and historical building restoration.

See photos page 6.

Maddi the Great Barrier lab

- black and proud to be pateke certified



Joanna Sim, Ranger Biodiversity - Pateke for DoC on Great Barrier Island has just had her bitch Maddi certified for working on pateke, no mean feat. Maddi will be used to locate pateke at nesting times and when necessary.

Maddi, Joanna's 18-month-old black labrador has just passed the DoC certification process to certify her to safely hunt and find pateke or brown teal.

She passed her interim certification (obedience test) at eight months which allowed Jo to take her onto DoC's land and expose her to pateke. The full certificate is issued when she demonstrates the ability to safely locate and indicate brown teal, without getting too close or trying to pick them up, and to not take too much interest in other species such as rabbits and pukeko.

"She's still a young dog and we are still learning together but she knows when that muzzle goes on, its work time", says Joanna. In her short working career she has already found over 70 pateke that people wouldn't have necessarily known about "and these are the ones that I caught! She has found more but I can't always catch them, added Joanna.

Being a lab she doesn't indicate classically like a pointer or setter but Joanna is learning to read her more subtle indications and she usually gives a little whine reserved only for pateke. Most work is done at night as that is when the pateke are out on the pastures foraging - it is much easier and less stressful for bird, dog and dog-handler at night! "Daytime work often takes longer to get one bird in the hand and can mean inadvertently destroying their roost sites and waking them up from their afternoon naps, something that can be I would rather avoid. But she loves her work!" Joanna concluded.

Wairarapa Chapter Clay Bird Shoot



Photo above: Chris Thomas chats with Kevin Campbell

Photo right: Graham Gurr



Above: A woman's work is never done: Ngaire Morris, Raana Campbell, Vietta Campbell



From left: Wayne Finlayson, Bill Biber, Simon Beveridge and Joe Bannister.

Below: Dave Smith and Gary Girvan



Kevin Morris never sheds a tear peeling onions "because I put the onion underwater, and snip off the base first."



Photo left: Paul Morris, Ross Cottle, Neil Candy, Kevin Campbell and Roydon Perry

Below: Mike O'Leary and Rob Minton



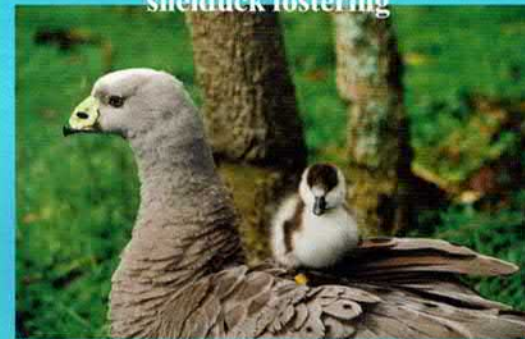
Below: Paul Clarke, of NZ Ammunition Company, Don Adams and Ed Beetham



A strong contingent of DU entries featured at the annual Blue Rock/Wairarapa Chapter clay bird shoot and lunch at James and Di Martin's property Waitawa, near Martinborough, held in November. A total of \$1500 went into DU's coffers and the major sponsor was Wairarapa Hunting and Fishing, to whom thanks are given. There were 62 shooters and Jo Bannister was the top person with 89, followed by Di Pritt on 65. 16-year-old Damion O'Leary was on 83 - a impressive score for a Junior.

Photos Peter Isaac

Wellington Zoo's shelduck fostering



Goosey the Cape Barren transporting one of her fostered shelduck ducklings



Clara, the hen, fostering shelduck ducklings



Mildred the shelduck with some of her ducklings

Wellington Zoo's Australian shelduck breeding success story on page 10 - these photos show the various mother figures who guaranteed the ducklings' early survival.

Manawatu Chapter Annual Dinner and auction



Manawatu chapter president Neil Candy presents Andy Tannock with the commemorative rimu plaque in recognition of his being the instigator of the Manawatu Chapter on this its 20th anniversary.

Right: guest speaker the talented Linda Topp, aka Ken entertains royally in both personae.



Above: Ducks Unlimited New Zealand president Ross Cottle at the rostrum

Below: the new Silks Room at the Awapuni Racecourse Event Centre and the silent auction items



Manawatu Chapter Dinner and Auction

Manawatu Chapter held their annual Dinner and Auction on 18 October 2008 at the new Silks Room at the Awapuni Racecourse Event centre with a crowd of nearly 200 supporters sitting down to a superb meal.

The event was also a celebration of the chapter reaching its 20th anniversary and to mark this occasion the committee set out to make it a night to remember. Andy Tannock, the instigator behind Manawatu Chapter being formed was presented with a commemorative rimu plaque.

Andy was also responsible for arranging our special guest speaker Linda Topp.

Linda gave a very entertaining talk on how she became involved in hunting and fishing and her experiences with filming her television programme.

Later in the evening 'Ken' arrived to help our wonderful auctioneer Mr Bob Wood conduct a very lively and very profitable auction.

Manawatu would like to thank all those who donated auction items or who helped in any way to make the 20th anniversary a hard act to follow.

See page 2 for details of the Manawatu Chapter Sporting Clay Shoot to take place on 29 March 2009.



Right: Anne Russell, wife of Peter, who took these photos.



This article was written by Michelle Duff of the Manawatu Standard on 25 November 2008. Flight has obtained kind permission of the Manawatu Standard to reproduce the article below:

Lovebirds busy keeping species alive

They met, they swam, they fell in love.

Three years ago, down in Christchurch, two little brown ducks were introduced. Somehow they just seemed to click, and the rest of the pond disappeared. Breeders noticed, and decided to pair the two for good. So they were moved to Palmerston North, to The Esplanade, and left to their own devices.

That's when they got busy.

In the last two years, the amorous brown teal (pateke) ducks have produced 38 little ducklings. Their healthy mating habits are being applauded around the country as the species, numbering only 1500, struggles against extinction.

Their last set of sprogs were born just six months ago, so it was a surprised Peter Russell who arrived at work yesterday to find seven new little ducklings swimming along behind Mum and Dad. The Esplanade's aviary keeper has been in charge of the two since their arrival - and time had not dulled their romance, he said. "They're a good breeding pair, very affectionate, they suit each other and they haven't stopped since they came here."

When two ducks look cosy they are kept together, so the partnership is not completely random.

"You have actually got a rather good pair before you start, rather than saying, 'here's a male, here's a female,' sort of thing... You don't put two people together and say 'Well, breed.' They'll say, 'bugger off, I don't even like you!' So they do like each other first."

The ducks like to go out in the evening and early morning, with much of the rest of the time spent in privacy under the bushes in their self-contained aviary.

The foliage cover provided a good mating environment for the semi-nocturnal birds, Mr Russell said.

He's been the aviary keeper for 30 years, and loves helping to boost the numbers of these native ducks. "It feels good because you know they're going to be released into the world. You feel good about that, trying to recover species being made extinct."

The Esplanade's aviary is one of the best captive breeding sites for brown teal (pateke) in New Zealand, Department of Conservation area manager Jason Roxburgh says.

"They [the aviary workers] are pretty good at it, they've pumped out heaps of ducklings, which is great."

There are 18 sites nationwide, and when ducklings are older they are released into bigger, predator-controlled areas in Fiordland, Cape Kidnappers or Northland.

Three years' worth of releases was usually enough to start a population, and if 50 percent of the ducks were still alive after 12 months, it was considered a success, Mr Roxburgh said. The brown teal used to be numerous, until the introduction of predators and destruction of their wetland habitat brought them close to extinction. "Basically, there used to be little brown ducks everywhere. Now there are just limited numbers where they have managed to hang on."

Mother Goose

A story of breeding Australian shelduck at Wellington Zoo

By Bronwyn McCulloch

There are very few Australian shelduck (*Tadorna tadornoides*) left in New Zealand. This self-introduced bird was first recorded in New Zealand in 1973 and since then there have been few recordings of wild birds breeding in New Zealand. However, after the latest 2008 breeding season at Wellington Zoo we have been inundated with juvenile Australian shelduck!

George and Mildred, our pair of shelduck who have been at Wellington Zoo for six years had never bred successfully, yet produced at least thirteen fertile eggs this year. As there were so many eggs we split them up to increase the chances of hatching as many as possible. We left some under the shelduck, and incubated the remaining eggs under a bantam chicken and our Cape Barren goose, Goosey. After hatching these eggs the foster incubator birds became foster parents to the ducklings. In fact, even though there were some differences in innate behaviours between the ducklings and their foster parents, it turned out that the foster parents showed better parenting behaviours than the ducklings' biological parents George and Mildred.

This year Mildred had been laying eggs erratically around her enclosure. To encourage her to lay in one single site we added a new nest box to their enclosure - a recycled kiwi burrow consisting of a tunnel entrance opening up into a square nest box.

Mildred laid three eggs and started to incubate these eggs. We pulled the remains of this first clutch, initially artificially incubating them before placing them under our broody chicken, Clara.

Clara hatched and reared this first clutch of ducklings in our brooders which were lined with plastic brooder mats with a heat lamp on the ducklings overnight until they just started getting feathers. A chicken crumble was offered at first in water as a watery mash, in a shallow dish covered in wire mesh. Since shelduck are grazing birds, plenty of chopped greens were also given. As the ducklings got older they began taking dry food, and their diet was changed to teal pellets. Large water basins placed into the brooders kept the ducklings occupied for hours.

Meanwhile Mildred had been busy laying a second clutch of ten eggs. As George and Mildred were first-time breeders and we were uncertain of Mildred's dedication to incubation and rearing, we took five of the ten eggs replacing them with infertile chicken eggs.

The five shelduck eggs we removed were placed under our Cape Barren Goose, Goosey. Goosey is a lovely gentle girl, who despite the fact she is unpaired had been determinedly sitting on clutches of her own eggs all season. We thought it was about time that Goosey got to experience motherhood! She hatched three of the shelduck eggs herself, but two of the shelduck eggs were late to hatch and were hatched artificially, as by this stage Goosey was up off her nest seeing to her mobile ducklings. The two ducklings were returned to Goosey after hatching in the incubators.

Mildred's tenacity surprised us; she incubated and hatched all five of her remaining eggs herself.

George and Mildred initially were good parents, but a couple of days after the ducklings hatched, Mildred began chasing, grabbing and shaking the ducklings, at one point holding one under the water. It was rather unfortunate really, as they had been doing so well, and it had been great to see them going through their normal breeding cycle.

We don't know what caused this sudden change in behaviour but suspect there was extra stress on the birds as, due to the risk of predation by cats, we had moved the shelduck to a different enclosure as soon as the ducklings had hatched. There was also a huge number of visitors at the zoo on the day Mildred showed this behaviour, which may have added to her stress.

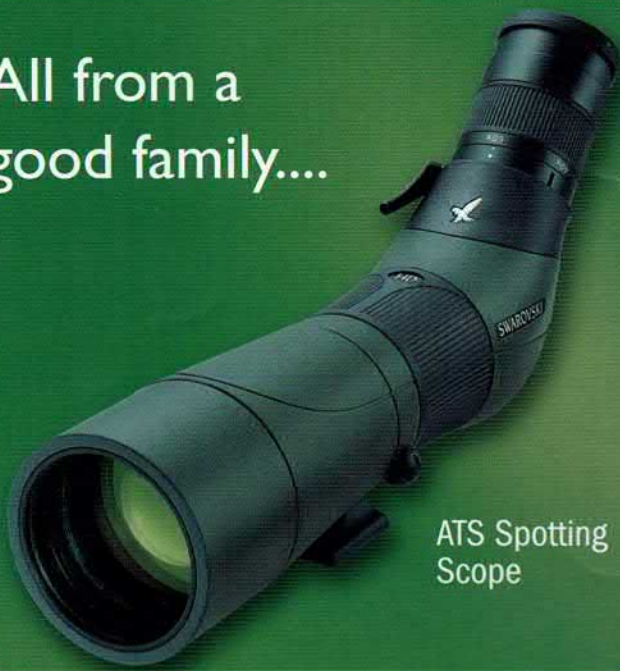
The five ducklings were removed from George and Mildred. We took the ducklings and swapped them with Clara, the chicken's three ducklings which were still in a brooder with her, as these three older ducklings were then old enough to be in a brooder by themselves. Though Clara looked after this second clutch well, she always went back and sat with her first clutch whenever the tops were off the brooder and she was free to choose which group to be with. In the end all ten of the ducklings from the second clutch were out with Goosey, as she had a more suitable grassy enclosure with a pond which the ducklings thoroughly enjoyed.

As the duckling grew it was interesting to see how the ducklings and the foster mothers' different innate behaviours didn't quite fit together. For a long time Clara would pick up chicken food and drop it at the ducklings' feet. We never saw the ducklings take the food once; they of course preferred to siphon their softening food out of water. I'm sure poor Clara was concerned that her 'chickens' just weren't eating! Both Goosey and Clara's ducklings rode around on their foster parents backs. Their foster mothers seemed to tolerate this. And it was always very funny to watch when Clara's ducklings were frolicking for hours in water. Clara would often just stand back staring at them!

Though the ducklings showed a lot of innate behaviours I believed they also learned behaviours from their foster parents. On several occasions I saw the ducklings from Goosey's group chase away blackbirds from their food dish - they would run at the blackbird with wings held slightly out from their bodies, opening and closing their beaks. I couldn't help but laugh each time I saw this as, the way they did was just so much like Goosey's chasing behaviour! I nearly expected them to start honking as they did this too - just like Goosey. I'm sure they learnt this behaviour from their foster mother. When the thirteen of the ducklings were eventually all put together the goose reared ducklings were dominant over the three ducklings raised solely by the chicken, even though the chicken-reared birds were older and bigger than their siblings. If only George and Mildred were able to rear some ducklings too it would have been very interesting to see how their ducklings turned out in comparison to Goosey's and Clara's!

The thirteen juveniles have now left their foster mothers and are all together waiting to be distributed to private collections. It was great that Goosey finally got to have some ducklings of her own, and was able to go through her normal breeding behaviours. Now that we know what a good brooder she is we may get her to brood and rear future clutches. It was interesting to observe that even though the ducklings often showed quite different innate behaviours to their foster mothers, Clara and Goosey still accepted and reared their little clutches of ducklings regardless. The experimentation with these clutches was done for two purposes - firstly to maximise production from the shelduck pair and secondly as a training exercise for Zoo staff. I think we were definitely successful on both fronts! (See photos page 8)

All from a
good family....



ATS Spotting
Scope



EL Binoculars



SLCNew
Binocular



LG 8x30
Rangefinder



Pocket Binocular

Recognise the importance of investing in precision,
with Swarovski Optik.

- Razor-sharp and high-contrast images right up to the periphery with total colour fidelity from the exclusive use of ultra-precise lenses and prisms.
- 100% functional reliability from -25° to $+55^{\circ}$ C
- Patented SWAROBRIGHT SWAROTOP or SWARODUR coatings
- All items shown are waterproof and nitrogen filled.
- 100% image and material inspection on every single instrument.
- All products are precision engineered exclusively in Austria.



SWAROVSKI
OPTIK

DISTRIBUTED BY

NEW ZEALAND
Ammunition
COMPANY LIMITED

PO BOX 40401 UPPER HUTT, Fax: 04 527 9243,
Email: sales@nzammo.co.nz www.nzammo.co.nz



One of our overseas members Basil George of Ogmore Village, Wales, writes...

Alan Wilks of Greytown who, with his late wife Di was one of the founders of this magazine, is also the person who arranges the mailing of all the copies of Flight which fly around the world (pun intended). Recently, Alan wondered about a longtime overseas member and whether, frankly, he was receiving the magazine and if so, how was he?

His name is Basil George, Landscape Contractor of Ivy Cottage, Ogmore Village, Glamorgan Vale, Wales. Email is b.george@bssupplies.com.

Basil wrote back to Alan most enthusiastically, enclosing photos and a fascinating little booklet about the life of his grandfather David, born 1868 which starts thus:

"David George was born on March 24th 1868 in the village of Maenclochog, being the son of Evan George of Celyn Farm. Details of Evan are scarce but he is listed in the 1901 Kelly's Dictionary as a farmer. It is said that he married three times and the number of offsprings he had do vary. He died at the age of ninety-eight and it is said that a fall off a hayrick helped him on his way! Much of his income through the season came from traveling a stallion around the farms and the like in North Pembrokeshire..."

As the story of this man continues, it is mentioned of his brothers that "...it is said that one either went to Australia or New Zealand, never to be heard of again".

When he was 11, with a toothache, his father, said to be a giant of a man, took him to the dentist – they walked some ten miles each way. The dentist worked as a blacksmith by day. Young David's tooth was removed by the blacksmith/dentist's homemade pliers. David never again had a tooth removed, the trauma remaining to his dying day.

David eventually ended up in the United States working in timber – lots of adventures, well told in this booklet. He married, back in Wales again, in 1893. He worked as a coachman – then chauffeur – for a large estate, where he worked for the next sixty years "albeit he had few other interests that made his life worthwhile". But the booklet allows that David bred prize-winning poultry, bred dogs and kept bees which he continued until the end of his life – many prizes having decorated his mantelpiece.

He was a gardener – again prize-winning. Basil writes that "whatever he took on in his life he became a master at it". His wife Esther was the manager of the money side of things – David once said "that his dear wife could save money when there was no money to save.

A busy entrepreneurial man in his way, David never smoked or drank – as was the way for members of 'chapel'. He and Esther had two sons.

Basil, his grandson, writes as the last sentence in this fascinating history (a poor précis by your editor, there was so much to take in!),

"David George was throughout his life an honest and respected Gentle-man".



Photo shows Basil George 2008, in front of his wetland

Basil George wrote to Alan Wilks:

Dear Alan

Yes I'm still around! If only by luck I feel, but I am up most mornings at 6 a.m. and as soon as it is light I am up and away ... Back in the 80s I spent some time with Hory Sinclair on his wetlands and while there I drove a digger for a day or so digging out one of the areas to extend the ponds, etc. But I have noticed that in the reports within 'Flight' I see no mention of the area any more. (Reason : Sinclair Wetlands was sold some ten years ago now – Ed.)

My last visit to NZ was in the 90s to the Commonwealth Games when I was assistant manager of the Welsh team but Adam my grandson and partner in the business was out there for a month in January last. A number of your countrymen/ladies call on us from time to time. We had the daughter and her husband of Peter Hayman of Waimate with us a month ago and also Colin Stott from Darfield has been with us and his brood from time to time. So we do keep in contact with what is going on!

I enclose some reading etc. – it is not so much Ducks Unlimited as a limited amount of Ducks. One duck has just hatched a late sitting on our pond. In a couple of hours (it is now 06:30 a.m.) the local estate will be shooting ducks on the moors around our area, then off on the pheasants for the rest of the day. It has been a very good season for ducks with more water through the summer ...

Regards to you and your members

Sincerely

Basil George

(To members: This wonderful booklet is available from the editor - just email or write and we will lend it to you - gail.isaac@gmail.com)

Pateke report from Tuhua

John Heaphy, Conservation Officer (Protected Species and Islands) for DoC's Tauranga Area Office reports from near the end of the third pateke breeding season on Tuhua. It will be remembered that the original release was in February 2006 and there was a supplementary release in March 2008.

In early August bad weather wrought a certain amount of havoc on Tuhua. The crater lake's water level had risen 30cm since John's previous visit on July 1, covering the bottoms of all feeders, which

were all retrieved and replaced along the now new water's edge up under the forest canopy. John reports that the water table was highest he had seen in 11 years but the good news was that all the wetland had lots of water through it for the rest of the pateke breeding season.

"Heard bittern booming." The mesh cages were working well under the feeders - so good in fact that a large goldfish was 'gill-meshed' in one, perhaps trying to feed on the maize?

Water levels now looking great



Photo above shows Sylvia and Neil Hayes' new "Chateau d'Maimai" and viewing hide at Taumata Lagoon near Carterton, Wairarapa, which already has over 30 names in the visitors book. The photo was taken in June 2008, with the water levels now looking great. Neil reports that the two problem bores on the neighbour's place have now been completely dismantled. This follows our previous story regarding the low water levels threatening the viability of the 10ha Taumata Lagoon, and the resolution of the issue in May 2008. The hearing determined that the Taumata Lagoon was indeed a

Wetland of National Importance and an Outstanding Oxbow and that the area must be totally protected from negative man-created external influences. The determination also recognised the important advocacy role such as a unique environment can fulfill.

The Brown Teal Conservation Trust's captive-breeding programme is back on track thanks mainly to member Claudia Duncan lending the Trust a female which was successfully paired with a male survivor of the 2007 stoat massacre. This gave the Trust two pairs, from which six progeny were reared, three from each pair.



Tel 06 367 8052 or
Email: skinit@xtra.co.nz

Bring 'em in with Avery Greenhead Gear Decoys



New Zealand distributors:
Deadeye Dick's
Shooting Supplies,
215 Heatherlea
East Road,
Levin.

Range also includes floating
and shell decoys
Available at leading shooting stores



Wairarapa Moana Alder Aerial Trial Proposal - Wairio Block involvement

Restoration Strategy

In 2007, Wildland Consultants completed a report on the restoration strategy for indigenous vegetation and plant species of the eastern shoreline of Lake Wairarapa. One of the high priority action points was to conduct trials on alder control. Wildland Consultants mapped selected pest plant infestations and indigenous vegetation on the eastern side of Lake Wairarapa in the summer of 2006/2007 in order to provide information to inform the restoration strategy.

A range of alder densities was found. Over 150ha on the eastern side of Lake Wairarapa have greater alder infestations of greater than 50%. Willow is also a weed at these sites and is interspersed with the alder.

Trials of methods of control

Trials have been completed by DoC by using a contractor with a quad and spray unit on the lower density infestations. Last year, Greater Wellington Regional Council (GW) completed trials using both casual staff and contractors cutting and stump-treating 50-75% alder infestations in Lake Domain. The results of these trials show that the quad and spray unit works where the infestations are not too dense (as the spray cannot penetrate tall, thick vegetation), while the ground crews are very expensive to use for denser infestations. Effectiveness has yet to be determined. The Wildland Consultants' report suggested that aerial trials be completed on the denser infestations. DoC and GW have been working together to select sites that would be representative of areas that would be the most practicable to control aerially.

The Proposal

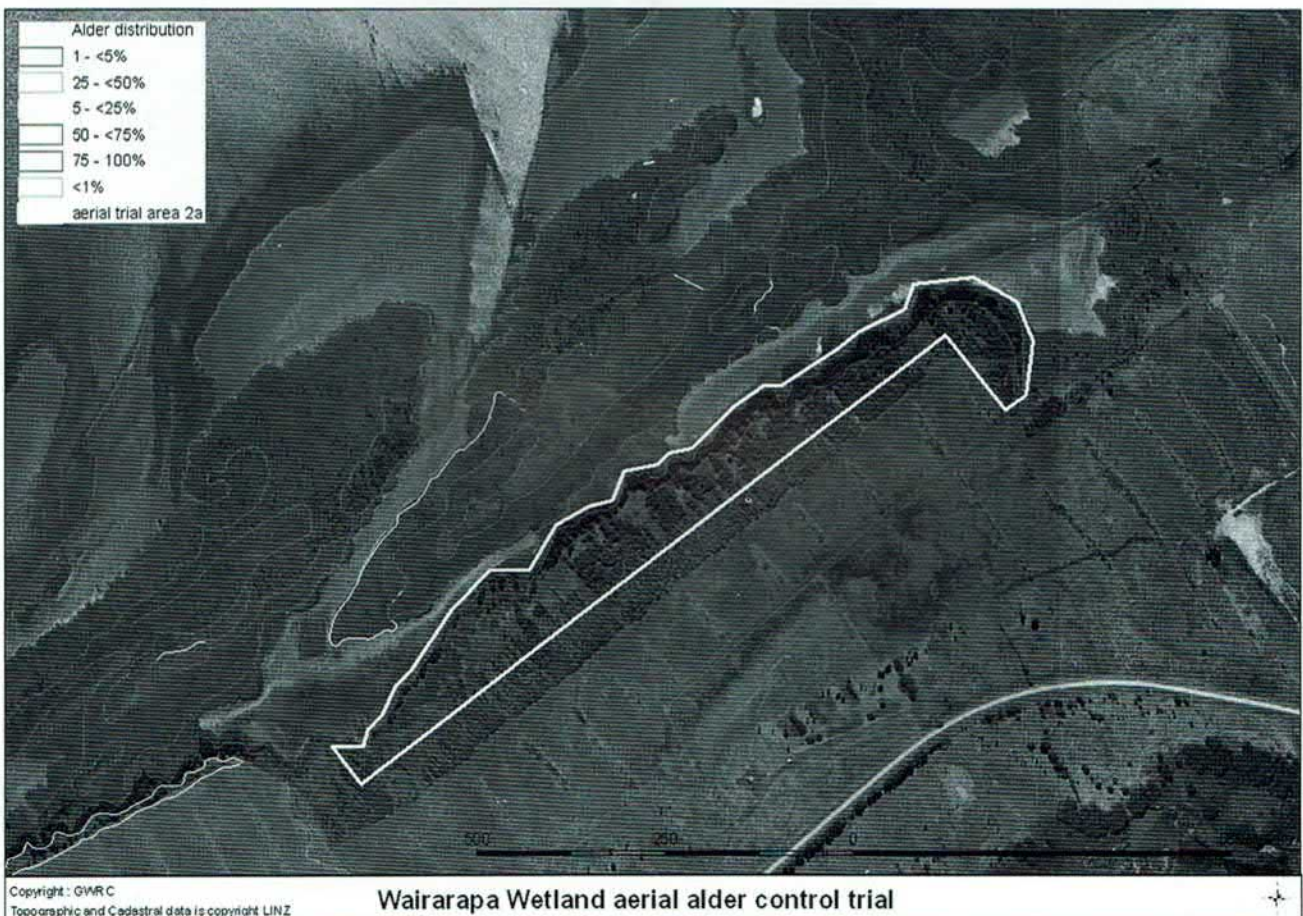
Site selection and trial proposed

Three sites, each 10ha in size, have been selected, with these sites representing different alder densities or alder/willow mixes. It is planned to trial two chemicals – *Roundup* and *Garlon360*, both of which are registered for use in wetlands. The latter chemical has been recently trialled by a NIWA scientist in Taupo. Each of the three sites is to be divided into two halves and the two different chemicals applied, using a helicopter. All neighbouring landowners will be consulted.

Monitoring of the outcome of the trial is to be completed and is currently being planned by a member of the DoC Conservancy team. The trial will only occur on a still day to avoid any spraydrift. It is intended to complete the work before the end of December 2008, as that is the best time to apply chemical to alders, as that is the time of year at which they are growing most actively.

Contact details:

Philippa Crisp
Principal Advisor
Parks
Greater Wellington
Ph:043817731
Email: philippa.crisp@gw.govt.nz



Blue Duck Lodges report

Dan Steele has sent the second Bush Telegraph from Blue Duck Lodges, situated in the King Country. Dan reports, and here are edited highlights in his words, that blue ducks have nested and are now hatching their chicks, lambing and docking has taken place, the replacement for the Berrymans' beekeeper bridge has been officially opened and many top guests and ecowarriors have been through the lodges.

Blue duck broods have started to appear, with up to five chicks. Some ducks are still nesting. If you have never seen a blue duck family swimming and feeding in the fast flowing white water, you should. It is a beautiful and powerful thing to witness. The Kaiwhakauka stream near Whio lodge is a top spot to view this.

Trapping of predators continues every month. Not many stoat are being caught due to the predator-control operations and many more stoat are being caught in our new lines in upper Retaruke.

A wild cat got into our pheasant pen and killed all 10 birds and only ate half of one, which what these predators can do to our native birds. The bounty on wild cats has since been doubled to \$50 and ecowarriors Rick, Max and May caught the cat when it came back for another meal.

We ran our second Whio Fieldday in September with top speakers and presentations, attended by 48 people. The main things to come out of the day were: the estimate that we only have 600 effective pairs of breeding blue duck in NZ; information-sharing between experts and groups; Bob Jordan's trap data presentation using Google Earth and the field trip seeing blue duck dogs working and blue duck aerial displays.

A steady supply of helpers has been coming through, checking traps and helping out on the farm. Rick Bond, a trained stoat hunter from the UK, where they've been doing this for hundreds of years, has been here three months. We are setting up a trial to see if Rick's tunnel traps catch more stoats and rats than the DoC boxes, as it appears they do.

With ongoing and increasing work volunteers are always welcome out here in the bush!!

We have our first wedding for the summer coming up. We've bought event gear to run weddings and other festivals. Party, party, all in the name of fun. BBC cameraman Dylan Winter is in the process of filming pighunting, blue duck, ecowarriors and some of Dan's other crazy schemes. Some footage will be available soon on youtube. We will keep you posted.

We are now making an entire hunting movie here which is planned for market next year. Hunting is conservation out here, and good fun.

National Geographic magazine should be out in the new year with some photos of Whakahoro. They stayed in Blue Duck lodge for three weeks, and kindly said in the visitor's book that it is "probably the nicest place we have ever stayed".

Whakahoro Rescue Unit (W.R.U.)

We have been called upon to perform many rescues here over the years, rescuing river users, lost trampers, accidents. A very lucky one recently, where we pulled the young German woman, Julia Jahn, from beneath a log which had trapped her for five hours, really made us think. Since then we've run a first aid course through the lodges and are setting up the W.R.U. The goal is to be prepared as best we can with training and equipment, link with search and rescue and police and improve communication with a satellite phone..... so if any one has a spare one... please contact us.

Further first aid and training courses are planned next year, so anyone keen to be involved, sing out.

Ko au te awa, ko te awa ko au. I am the river and the river is me.

Dan's email is dan@blueducklodge.co.nz

Blue Duck Lodge Group's priority is to work with stakeholders in preserving the area's natural beauty while educating guests about blue duck, local native species and the history of the Whakahoro Valley.

In 2008 Blue Duck Lodges was the winner of two categories of the Ballance Farm Environmental Awards, Habitat Improvement and Innovation Categories.

In 2007 Dan Steele (Host) was presented with a Conservation Award from the Department of Conservation. He has entered Blue Duck Lodges into the Ballance Farm Environmental Award with his eye on the supreme award. Here's hoping, Dan!



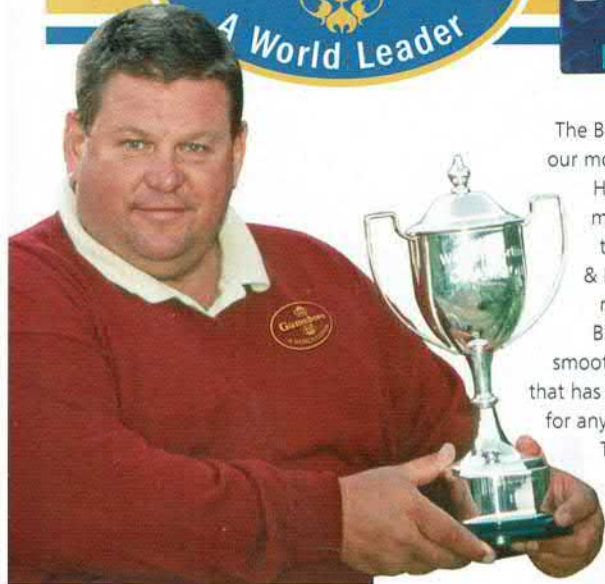
The Bridge to Nowhere



Ecowarriors working on traps



Typical of the buildings at Whakahoro



Blue Diamond

The Blue Diamond is by far our most popular cartridge. High performance and moderate recoil due to the exclusive Baschieri & Pellagri Gordon recoil reduction system. The Blue Diamond is a very smooth consistent cartridge that has excellent kills, a must for any competitive shooter.

The cartridge features the all important Diamond Shot™ plastic or fibre wads available.

White Gold XLR

The White Gold XLR uses the strong White Gold brand and performance but like the XLR Fibre it has excellent pattern desites for the long range shooter while providing low recoil. A top performance training or competition load, that is soft on the shoulder and on your pocket. Available with a plastic wad only .

White Gold Original

The ultimate sporting clay cartridge as used by the most influential world champions, George Digweed, Ben Hushwaite and Ladies Champion Kate Brown. The White Gold cartridge is the most famous and successful cartridge ever in the world of sporting shooting, offering excellent performance and patterns without being too harsh on your shoulder. White Gold Original contains Gamebore's exclusive Diamond Shot™ .

THE WORLD CHAMPION'S CHOICE

George Digweed

WINNER OF 15 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

"...if you want to succeed, you have to shoot the best"

Black Gold High Velocity is new to the competition range, It offers characteristics of the top end competition loads with a velocity of 1500fps, it has superb kills and great patterns, utilises the Gordon recoil reduction system and Gamebore's exclusive Diamond Shot™ .

Description	Load	Velocity	Shot Size
White Gold XLR	24gm	1400fps	7½, 9
White Gold XLR	28gm	1400fps	7½, 8, 9
Blue Diamond	24gm	1400fps	7½
Blue Diamond	28gm	1400fps	7½, 8, 9
Blue Diamond (Fibre Wad)	28gm	1400fps	8
White Gold Original	24gm	1400fps	7½, 9
White Gold Original	28gm	1400fps	7½, 8, 9
Black Gold	28gm	1500fps	7½
20g Competition	24gm	1350fps	7½, 8



The Affordable Choice of Quality.



Demonstration Guns Available
Geoff Wells 027 290 2703

SKB 4000 RRP \$4,995

SKB 4000 features big bore technology, 5 competition length choke tubes and an airline safe aluminium reinforced case.

Available in Trap and Sporter Models (30" and 32"). Featuring adjustable comb, dropout trigger system, chrome lined bores, ventilated side and top ribs. Utilising the finest select walnut stock & forend, high grade checkering and engraving puts the SKB 4000 ahead of any gun in its class.

TO ARRANGE A DEMONSTRATION TEST FIRE VISIT ANY AUTHORISED SKB DEALER: McCoy & Thomas Hunting & Fishing Whangarei, Serious Shooters Auckland, Bronco's Sports Tauranga, Hamills NZ Hastings, Dave Hern Fishing & Shooting Waipukurau, Manawatu Hunting & Fishing Palmerston North, Hamills NZ Christchurch, Ballinger's Hunting & Fishing Christchurch, Shooter's Supplies Christchurch, Shooter's World Gore.

