

Flight

OCTOBER

2000

ISSUE 105



DUCKS UNLIMITED NEW ZEALAND INC.

For Wetlands and Waterfowl.

Companies Challenged to "Get in the Green"

The corporate sector could take a more active role in protecting the environment and adding to the efforts being made by communities and environmental groups.

Wine group, BRL Hardy Limited, earlier this year called on Australia's corporate sector to take a more active and meaningful role in protecting the Australian environment and to add to the efforts being made by communities and environmental groups.

David Woods, International Trading Director of BRL Hardy Ltd., proprietors of the Banrock Station winery, issued the challenge following the company's joint receipt of the inaugural Prime Minister's Australian Business Award for Environmental Leadership through its world-renowned Banrock Station wines and wetland rehabilitation projects. The award was presented as part of United Nations' World Environment Day.

"Local communities can only contribute so much to environmental protection," David Woods said. "However, Australia's corporate sector, renowned for its industrial innovation, world-best practice and solution solving, has yet to fully explore the opportunities to be gained in partnering environmental protection.

"Enhancing the nation's environmental profile requires the corporate sector to now accept a new degree of responsibility for participating in and leading sustainable programmes to look after our own backyard," he said.

The Banrock Station vineyards feature a successful major wetland rehabilitation project along 12 kilometres of the River Murray in South Australia's Riverland and an innovative, state-of-the-art environmental information centre.

"Enhancing the nation's environmental profile requires the corporate sector to now accept a new degree of responsibility for participating in and leading sustainable programmes to look after our own backyard..."

The centre, valued in excess of \$1 million, is due to be opened later this year and is being built on the Banrock Station property, near Kingston-on-Murray.

Combining new vineyard development, land preservation and river flows, the Banrock Station property covers over 1700 hectares of which 230 hectares are new vineyard with the balance being returned to its natural state.

The centre has been planned to feature the latest environmental building developments and be as self sufficient as possible. Its construction includes environmental technologies ranging from stabilised rammed earth using regional soil, to steel framing and timbers from sustainable sources. The building layout, orientation, materials and insulation are designed to maintain comfort in the building by natural means. Water services through the building involve rain water capture from all roofs and sullage outflow is to be cleaned, filtered, stored and reused for toilet flushing and irrigation. The surrounding environment and native vegetation are to be undisturbed by construction and the building itself.

Part proceeds from the sales of all Banrock Station wine brands are designated for environmental protection, with more than \$240,000 already contributed in Australia. The company has made an environmental commitment focused on becoming a world leader in growing "natural capital" and emphasising a high level of environmental, social and economic outcomes.

Banrock's success of linking a wine brand with the environment has seen this influence not only extended to wetlands and wildlife protection projects in all Australian states but now overseas to Europe. Negotiations are underway in Canada, the United Kingdom and Sweden.

Banrock Station's Australian sponsorship activities were through an initial partnership with Landcare Australia and this financial link has recently been extended to the Wetland Care Australia group.

Australian and international projects already benefiting include the Mason Park Wetland near an Olympic Games site in Sydney, wetlands in South Australia's Riverland, at Seaford in Victoria and bushland near Brisbane. International projects include rehabilitation of wetlands in the De Weerribben National Park in the Netherlands and sponsorship of the Finnish branch of the World Wildlife Fund to conserve migratory bird breeding areas at Liminganlahti Bay.

BRL Hardy is committed to seeking new associations with environmental groups around the world.



**TAUPO
Native Plant
Nursery**

Established 1961

- The leading supplier of native plants to landscapers, roading contractors, local bodies and nurseries
- Extensive range of container-grown native and wetland plants
- A FREE descriptive award-winning catalogue
- Very competitive pricing
- We freight New Zealand-wide
- Native and ornamental sales area open to public.

**"New Zealand's
Revegetation Centre"**

**156 Centennial Drive
P.O. Box 437, Taupo.
Ph (07) 378 5450 Fax (07) 378 6030**

WANTED

A reward is offered to any DU member who can provide information regarding the removal of one pair of Scaup from 'Gretel Lagoons' in Carterton during August 2000.

Please Phone Neil Hayes (06) 379 6692
Collect.

INSIGHT

Craig Worth
President

In July, Fiona and I made our way to Wellington for a week's business. Deciding to take a bit of a scenic tour we made our way through Wairarapa. It was a great opportunity to catch up with a number of members and see some of the wetland projects that DU has funded in the area over the years.

The view from Howard and Pearl Egans' front door across their magnificent wetland (Canada Flats) is a real tribute to the unimaginable number of hours they have spent developing the project. The large population of waterfowl that visits or is resident is a great indication that Howard and Pearl have developed the most essential ingredient to species survival: their habitat. It was also very interesting to see Howard's amazing collection of decoys.

We then went on to see Glenys Hanson's spectacular gardens and wetlands. We caught her mowing lawns on a bitterly cold winter's afternoon. It appears that Glenys is one of those people who never stop working. Once again, the wetlands are a tribute to her and her late husband Ted, both fantastic supporters of DU over the years.

Special thanks must go to Neil Hayes for taking time out of his busy schedule to show us around the neighbourhood. Poor Neil is still getting over the loss of his 24 year-old brown teal that passed away a few months prior. I found out that she was originally bred by my father. We had a drink to her.

What a great AGM and conference at Taupo's Lakeland Hotel. You can read a detailed report on the weekend in this issue. It appears that the good work we are doing through our wetlands projects is definitely starting to regenerate interest in this organisation. It was a very happy gathering. I offer special thanks to everyone who assisted in one way or another, and further special thanks to all who attended.



CONTENTS

Special Features

Companies Challenged to "Get in the Green"
inside front cover

Annual Conference 2000 Report
by Alan Wilks 6

Showing Them a Good Time
by Graham Gurr 8

A Letter to the Editor 9

Brown Teal Released on Mana Island
by Alan Wilks 10

Turning a Profit from Ecological Disaster 12

Regular Features

Our People 4

DU News 5

&c. 14

Drawing: The Pied Cormorant 15

Flight Ecofile 15

OUR MISSION

We are a voluntary membership-based society dedicated to the conservation of New Zealand wetlands through:

- wetland restoration and development;
- conservation programmes for threatened waterfowl;
- advocacy and education of wetland values.

By these means we seek to ensure the ethical and sustainable use of wetland resources by all existing and future users.

Cover Photo: Kimberley. Photo: Andre Terpstra.

Flight is published by:
Ducks Unlimited New Zealand Inc.
ISSN 1173-2776
P.O. Box 9795, Newmarket, Auckland, New Zealand.

Editing & Production: Gallery Books & Crafts, Box 99, Carterton
E-mail: artscape@xtra.co.nz
Printer: Lamb-Peters Print, 106A Main Street, Greytown

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Co-patrons	Lady Isaac, QSM, Christchurch Norman Marsh, Reporoa	
President	Craig Worth, Hamilton a/h	(07) 854 0494 (07) 846 8719
Chairman/Treasurer	Graham Gurr, Auckland	(09) 489 5337
Vice-president	Neil Candy, Palmerston North	(06) 353 6132
Directors	William Abel, Wellington Ossie Latham, Auckland Ross Cottle, Masterton David Smith, LLB, Auckland Tom van Dam, Te Kauwhata Alan Wilks, Greytown Jim Law, Pirinoa	(04) 586 2752 (09) 483 7401 (06) 378 7408 (09) 298 4719 (07) 826 3981 (06) 304 9729 (06) 307 7855



OUR People



Jim Law

New DU Director

Jim Law has been a member for just over a year but joined DU Inc. while working in America. He and his wife Marilyn attended the 25th Annual Conference at Tokaanu, an event Marilyn says she anticipated with some trepidation but admitted afterwards she had thoroughly enjoyed.

A former senior executive with an international oil company with postings around the world, Jim is now semi-retired on the family property at Pirinoa in South Wairarapa. He has created a number of wetlands and is an enthusiastic conservationist and supporter of DU. His business background will be invaluable to DU and members of the Board have welcomed his appointment at the recent annual conference.

Honorary Life Member

The Board of DU had received several recommendations from members that Jack Worth, a founder member of DU, and father of our President, should be granted Honorary Life Membership in recognition of his long-standing support of DU.

The Board presented Jack with a certificate of appreciation at this year's Annual Conference dinner.

Now the Board has great pleasure in conferring Honorary Life Membership on Jack Worth for his outstanding contribution to DU, in particular his involvement with Operation Gretel and the valuable work he has done to foster the breeding of this species of waterfowl in New Zealand by erecting and maintaining grey teal nest boxes.

The Andrew Dixon MacMaster Trophy and Grant

Peter Olsen of Colyton is the 2000 recipient of the trophy and grant. The award acknowledges his work in creating a wetland for youth involvement (see Flight, October 1998). The grant of \$1,000 will be used to assist with the cost of building a predator-proof fence around part of the wetland to hold pinioned waterfowl.

Each year Peter Olsen hosts some 14 schools and youth organisations on a regular basis, encouraging an interest in waterfowl and wetlands among young people.



Neil Candy (left) presents the trophy to Peter Olsen.

Photo: courtesy Neil Candy.

The Andrew Dixon MacMaster Trophy

was established by retired American teacher and DUNZ Life Member Dr Tony Reiger in memory of his father-in-law. The trophy is provided to encourage involvement in wetland conservation, especially among young people. DUNZ is indebted to Tony Reiger's support in assisting in conservation education in New Zealand Schools. The award is funded by Tony and co-sponsor, Life Member Dr Steven Messerschmidt, both of Alaska.

Members' Addresses

There have been some computer problems printing members' address labels. Although the address database has been carefully checked, it is possible that it still contains mistakes.

Any members who have changed their addresses in the past eight months or less, or who have experienced difficulties receiving their copies of Flight, should contact Tom van Dam, P.O. Box 35, Te Kauwhata, or phone (07)826 3981, fax (07)826 3462.

Hamilton Chapter

A dinner and auction is planned for 25 November to coincide with a Board meeting. This will be an opportunity for Hamilton members to meet their directors.

The venue is yet to be decided but members will be advised. For further information contact:

Michelle MacKay (Secretary) (07) 889 3346 or Ray Hayward (Chairperson) (07) 855 2205.

Hamilton Chapter Field Trip

The Hamilton Chapter is organising a field trip for Saturday 28 October to view the restoration work at Lake Ngaroto near Te Awamutu. This field trip will give members and friends the opportunity to take a leisurely walk (about two and a half hours) around the margins of the lake. The field trip will then take in Murray Shaw's property at Ohaupo providing an opportunity to view the five ponds and wetlands that he has developed over a number of years. There will be a barbecue lunch.

For further information contact:

Michelle MacKay (Secretary) (07) 889 3346 or Ray Hayward (Chairperson) (07) 855 2205.

Manawatu Chapter

The fundraising dinner will be held at The Coachman, Palmerston North, on Saturday 28 October. Contact Neil Candy (06) 353 6132, or Anne and Dave West (06) 357 5716 with offers of auction items.

Wairarapa Chapter

The Chapter AGM was held in Masterton on 8 August and was reasonably well attended with a number of interesting topics discussed, such as ways of encouraging new younger members, wetland subsidies, the dinner and sporting shoot.

Ken Barnes was re-elected as Chairperson and new member Steve Playle vice-chairperson. Glenys Hansen retired after 15 years as Treasurer/Secretary and the Chapter acknowledged her hard work over that period.

Joyce Brooks has agreed to take over the position, for which the Chapter is grateful and will give her all the support she needs.

Long time member Bill Clinton-Baker has undertaken to organise a ringing roster to contact members regarding Chapter events

- The Chapter dinner and auction was held at Copthorne Resort Solway Park in Masterton on Saturday 30 September. A report of the function will be published in the next issue of Flight.

- Sporting Clay Shoot

This event will be held at the Eketahuna Gun Club on Sunday 29 October. For further information, if members have not yet received notice, please call Ross Cottle (06) 378 7408 or Ken Barnes (06) 379 7038.

National Raffle

This closed on 30 September. Members are urged to return their raffle butts or unsold tickets immediately to save William Abel having to send out reminders.

As at the beginning of September, one member (guess who) had sold 25 books.

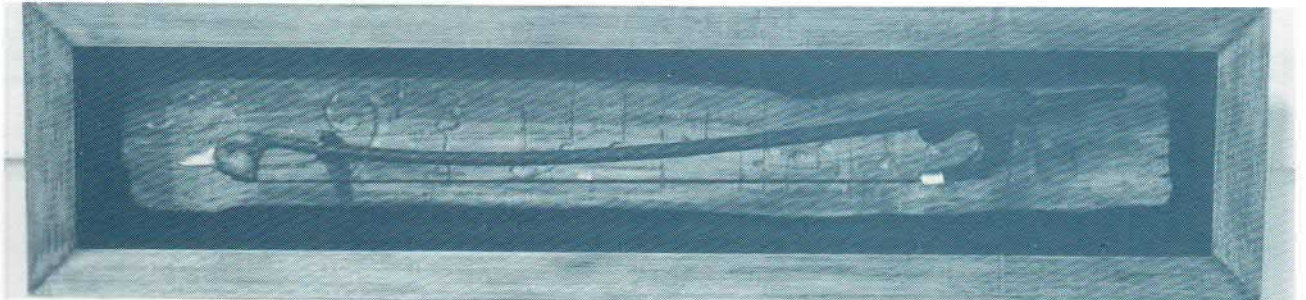
Chatham Islands Brown Teal Release

DU is holding discussions with Internal Affairs regarding the Millennium funding which has been spent to date.

Lake Waikare

In 1998 DU lodged an objection, and subsequently an appeal, against the resource consent applied for by Environment Waikato. A hearing date has yet to be allocated.

A fighting fund was established during the Annual Conference weekend to assist with legal costs of DU's pursuing its action to ensure proper management of this significant wetland system. Members or interested readers can send donations to Waikare Fighting Fund, P.O. Box 9795, Newmarket, Auckland.

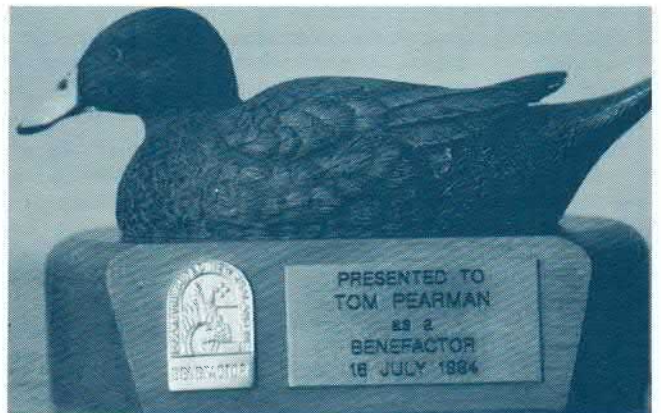


DU Congratulates Award-winning Artist

An artist with an association with DU has won one of five merit awards in this year's Golden C' Art Exhibition Group "Facing the Music" National Art Awards and Exhibition held in Carterton in September.

Stephen Gibbs of Karori won his award for his entry Contra Bass Bow (pictured above) for a stringed instrument in wood, silver, and oils. New Zealand's only archetier (maker of bows for stringed instruments), 49 year old Stephen Gibbs is a largely self-taught artist. He has been studying bow-making for three years, travelling to UK and Europe to learn from exponents of the craft there in 1999 on a Montana Study Scholarship. For some years this former DU member has been making and supplying DU's donor decoys. The decoys include representations of grey duck, brown teal, scaup, shoveller and blue duck and are presented to acknowledge donations of particular amounts.

Photo: Matthew Lyndon Smith/Golden C' Art Exhibition Group.



A Gibbs donor decoy.

Annual Conference 2000 Report

By Alan Wilks

The Lakeland Hotel, Taupo, proved to be an excellent venue for this year's conference. The organising committee headed by Graham Gurr was responsible for planning another memorable weekend which began with the Friday night get together and an opportunity for the 80-plus members attending to mix and meet new members and catch up with old ones.

Despite an indifferent forecast, immediately following the AGM on Saturday morning, 73 members in two buses headed for Lochinver Station on the Napier/Taupo Road. Some of the party had the rare experience of riding in a coach driven by the owner who also happens to be the President of DU.



Grand backdrop to the Lochinver Station wetland. Photo: Alan Wilks.

Ducks Unlimited New Zealand Inc. 26th AG Meeting, Lakelands Hotel, Taupo, 22 July 2000

Abridged* Minutes

Present

Board Members: Craig Worth, Graham Gurr, Neil Candy, David Smith, Ossie Latham, Alan Wilks, Tom van Dam, William Abel, Fiona Stanaway (minutes secretary).

Apologies: David Wilks, K. Barnes

Minutes of the Previous AGM

These, as published in Flight 101, were confirmed.

Reports

Following practice adopted in previous years, the President's and Treasurer's reports were published in Flight, and were adopted by the meeting. A full set of audited accounts was available for members to sight. D. Smith gave a brief overview of WWF Trust funds as a follow-up to the report printed in Flight.

Election of Directors

D. Smith, T. Van Dam and N. Candy were reappointed to the Board. President Craig Worth welcomed Jim Law as the new member of the Board.

Project Supervisors' Reports

Reports for operations Gretel, Royal Swan, Whio, and Pateke as published in Flight were adopted.

In discussion, the aims and objectives and continuing relevance of Operation Gretel was considered. The point was made that it was economically better to make use of existing nest boxes and continuation of the project was not costing much. The project would be reviewed at the next Board meeting.

D. Wilks extended congratulations to Peter Russell for his efforts with Project Whio.

In discussion of Operation Pateke, concerns were expressed about releasing captive reared birds into the wild. The natural habitat and resources would not be able to sustain this population boost. It was felt that more emphasis needed to be put into habitat promotion.

David Smith made a presentation on the Lake Waikare issue, and in discussion a motion was adopted to the effect that DU should pursue this matter at the Board's discretion.

T. Caithness is to prepare a template letter for publication in Flight so that members can use this to write to the Minister and newspapers indicating support for the protection of this important wetland.

Chatham Islands Brown Teal

D. Smith reported on his involvement in the proposed release of brown teal on the Chatham Islands and explained the situation to date. He referred to the articles published in Flight 104. In discussion it was explained that the Board's position is in favour of continuing with the programme. If releasing brown teal on the Chathams is not going to happen, then DU will withdraw and attempt to recoup the money already spent. A motion seeking to abandon the project was lost and after further discussion, members decided to endorse the Board's position.

The meeting closed at 10.10am.

* Copies of the full minutes are available on request from Craig Worth, P.O. Box 5095, Hamilton

Lochinver Station is vast (see box page 7 for some big statistics) and the first indication of its size was the driveway in. Craig Worth commented that it's not often you can travel along someone's drive in a bus doing 80k in top gear.

The field trip party was met by station manager Steve Ligtenberg and his partner Jill Houlden and shortly after headed off for the wetland. This was some 15 minutes' walk from one of the many station roads. Covering some 100ha it's more of a lake than a wetland. Stream-fed and dotted with islands carrying several hundreds of species like mallard, paradise duck, Canada geese and black swan, it's an impressive hunk of water.

Returning to the buses, the party continued several kilometres along well-kept station roads and saw only a third of the property. At one of several shearer's quarters lunch awaited. The barbecue meal began with a wine tasting courtesy of Rongopai Wines, with Tom van Dam saying a few words about each wine. The barbecue featured delicious duck and sweet corn sausages made to the President's personal recipe and prepared by Malcolm Dench.

Lochinver Station's hospitality was acknowledged by the presentation of a number of grey teal nest-boxes made by Jack Worth.

Lines from Bruce Stronach's poem, The Spearwah Station

*"It's big and large and wide
and huge and long and deep,
this station,*

*It's twice as wide and thrice as
long as many a bigger nation.*

*The men that ride are the
station's pride and thousands of
miles they go,*

*They can ride for years, in
sweat and tears, and never the
whole run know."*

The Annual Conference dinner that evening saw 109 members and guests enjoying an excellent buffet meal and more generously donated Rongopai wine.

Several presentations followed the dinner. The Bill Barrett Trophy was presented to Ken Cook in recognition of his work over many years as Operation Wetlands Co-ordinator.

This year, the Andrew Dixon MacMaster Trophy and Grant, in past years presented to a school or conservation group to acknowledge their efforts in creating wetland habitat, was presented to Peter Olsen and received on his behalf by Neil Candy.

A certificate of appreciation was presented to Jack Worth (see page 4).

The event grossed \$11,713 for wetland development.

Then the maestro Bob Wood, auctioneer supreme, got to work with 30 excellent main auction items assembled by Michelle MacKay (who also ensured that the conference registrations were handled smoothly) and entertained members with his patter and humour. The auction grossed over \$8,000. Together with the proceeds of the silent auction and the raffle, The event grossed \$11,713 for wetland development.

Conference activities on the Sunday morning included an open meeting of the Waterfowl and Wetlands Trust. The Trust's investment portfolio was discussed and members were assured of the Trust's strong financial position and background.

Dr Mike Hucks of the Waterfowlers Association spoke to the work this body is doing to preserve a vital wetland oxbow of the Waikato River and provided a display of photographs.

The conference weekend closed with a few appropriate words from DU President Craig Worth.



Presentation of Jack Worth's grey teal nest boxes to Lochinver Station. Photo: Craig Worth.



Chris Bindon and Ray Hayward attending to the barbecue lunch on the wide open range at Lochinver. Photo: Craig Worth.

Lochinver Station

Early attempts in the mid to late 1800s by Messrs McDonald, Munro, Lane and Carswell to farm the property were defeated by cobalt deficiency and the land was abandoned.

In 1958, W.A. Stevenson Holdings purchased 5,260ha and developed 100ha around an old woolshed and homestead. Three additional parcels of land were acquired by 1990, and by 1998, the station covered some 14,200ha.

The station ranges from 760 to 1005 metres above sea level, receiving long and hard winters, up to 130 frosts a year, and half a dozen snowfalls. Rainfall averages between 1,700 and 2,100mm annually. Winters are a limiting factor in the stock carrying capacity.

Between 1961 and 1982, a massive development programme was undertaken, turning 12,500ha of scrub into productive pastoral farmland. The development is ongoing, with large capital subdivision programmes and fertiliser applications. The station now has 65km of pumice roads and 700km of fencing, and six separate water systems supplying water for stock.

Lochinver has a staff of 17, including six stock staff, four tractor and machinery operators, four mechanics, maintenance and project staff, two administrators and one involved in pest control. Cropping and harvesting involves contractors as well, and some 40 dogs assist

with shepherding. Staff live in 18 homesteads, with children being transported to the local school by station school bus.

Typical inputs include 80 -100km of new fencing annually, applications of Pot Super at a rate of 1,000kg/ha on the flats and 750kg/ha on the hills. Cobalt and selenium are supplied to stock through fertiliser, drenches and vaccination to overcome deficiencies of these trace elements.

The station is stocked with 30,000 Perendale ewes and 8,000 hoggets. The station's Perendale stud consists of 1,300 ewes and 300-plus ram sales per year. Approximately 1,000 heifers and steers, and 50,000 lambs are finished each year. Between three and four thousand dairy weaners are grazed from November to April, and up to 2000 dairy heifers during the winter. Some 6,000 dairy cows graze swedes during the winter, and 500 Angus beef cows are run on the hills.

As well as the 1,300 bales of wool a year produced on the station, an extensive area is grown in crops. Two thousand hectares of swedes are grown and sold for grazing annually. Four hundred hectares of whole crop oat silage is produced, along with 200ha of black oats, 200,000 bales of hay (mainly for sale), and 100ha of carrots for juicing.

(Adapted from a visitor information sheet provided by Stevenson Lochinver Station.)

Showing them a Good Time



Dick and Nancy Jacobs were the successful bidders for the eight-day hunting trip to New Zealand at the 1999 Washington State DU Inc. convention. It was our pleasure to welcome them to New Zealand in June this year.

The Jacobs' had never been out of continental USA, so the 17 hour flight to New Zealand came as something of a shock, especially as they arrived here at five in the morning. Graham Gurr was at the airport to meet them and take them on to the first stop of their trip, which for various reasons was Di Pritt's property at Ohakune. This meant a five hour drive from Auckland. While Nancy dozed in the back, Dick filled Graham in on his background and involvement with DU in the USA.

Dick is in the lumber business and farms on the Olympic Peninsula of Washington State. On 800 acres he grows corn and peas for the local market, 300 acres of the farm have been restored to wetlands under a government programme, one which will permanently retire this part of the farm. DU contributed US\$150,000 for control structures and engineering and the government paid the Jacobs' market value for the land for retiring it, even though they will retain ownership.

Having completed several grand slams of deer, Dick is a well-known big game hunter in the US, and is currently working on a grand slam of wild sheep. Last year he bagged the biggest dall ram shot for many years.

To say that the Jacobs' enjoyed their stay at Ohakune would be an understatement. The



The Jacobs' (left) with Malcolm Dench of Te Awamutu and Butch the labrador.

hunting was hard, and although there were few ducks, paradise ducks made for some enjoyable hunts.

After three days, Graham Gurr collected the Jacobs' and took them to Taupo to sample the trout fishing. Using the Wilks' cottage as a base, they tried their luck on the Hinemaiaia River for two days. Unfortunately neither Dick nor Nancy had fly fished before, so much time was taken up with learning the basics of casting a fly. Nancy is a very successful salmon fisher in her home state and showed a determination to land a trout that would shame most locals. But, with the river rising and coloured, the fishing was hard and it was not to be.

Dave Johnson's Broadlands property was the venue for the next spell of hunting. As elsewhere in the country at this time, ducks were few and far between. Those that did put in an appearance were warmly received. Then it was on to Craig Worth's property just out of Hamilton where a

drift hunt down local rivers proved to be one of the highlights of the trip. Many ducks were seen and a few were shot.

The Jacobs' trip wound up with a weekend hunt in the Gurr/Smith property on the Waikato River with a very successful swan hunt. Everyone achieved a limit bag. One of the swan was frozen and returned with the Jacobs' to the US where it is to be mounted as a permanent reminder of their trip to New Zealand.

Dick and Nancy stayed on in New Zealand for several more days, returning to Hamilton for the Field Days where Dick picked up some ideas to take home.

The Jacobs' were a pleasure to host and proved to be great ambassadors for DU Washington. They left vowing to return and their hosts looking forward to that time.

Story: Graham Gurr

Photos: Craig Worth

Environment Education:

Close Call for MIS Science Centre

A unique environmental education institution was nearly nipped in the bud when the Ministry of Education declined to renew funding for Masterton Intermediate's Environmental Science Centre in June. Funding from the Ministry's Learning Outside the Classroom was to be discontinued.

Used by most Masterton primary schools, and developed with input from local service clubs, DU members, and the Eastern and Central Community Trust, the facility cost \$80,000. MIS was the first recipient of the

Andrew Dixon MacMaster Trophy for furthering student interest in wetlands and waterfowl conservation. The Centre featured in Flight in July 1997 which outlined the learning programme available to students through the facility.

DU was quick to publicly express its concern at this blow against an innovative and award winning educational resource serving Wairarapa school students. DU Director Alan Wilks wrote in the Wairarapa Times-Age: "I have witnessed firsthand the valuable contribution this makes for students from a wide range of schools, not

only MIS, to create an understanding of and interest in conservation values. Without education of the next generation the future of our environment is in jeopardy and Ducks Unlimited is a conservation organisation that constantly supports that future."

When Wairarapa MPs Georgina Beyer and Wyatt Creech became involved in the issue, lobbying Education Minister Trevor Mallard, \$14,000 was offered by the government by way of transitional funding for the Centre. This has allowed the school to keep the Centre open until new funding is applied for.



Flight's Editor replies:

Dear Pat Robson,

Thank you for your comments on Flight. It is a rare occasion when Flight receives correspondence and your letter raises an issue DU is keen to address.

DU will be pleased to assist the setting up of South Island chapters. The only reason there are no DU chapters in the South Island is that no one has been sufficiently enthusiastic to start one.

South Island members interested in forming a Chapter could get together to form one and set up a Chapter executive which could include a chairperson and secretary/treasurer and other officers as required. The Board of DU will provide advice, and a list of current members in the appropriate region can be supplied to any members taking the initiative. Chapters of DU are autonomous groups of members who pool their efforts in meeting the aims and objectives of DU.

A new Chapter could identify a wetland that could be created or enhanced with a DU subsidy. With even a handful of people involved, such a project advances DU's

A Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir,

I have been a member of Ducks Unlimited for some years now and have always been curious as to why there is no South Island Chapter.

I have spoken to several South Island members but the only reply I get to this question is a barely audible mumble and the subject is changed.

As someone who has spent the last 13 years developing a sanctuary for birds in what must be one of the biggest areas for birds, both bush, shore, sea and wetlands in the South Island, it continually puzzles me why no visible effort has been made to extend your activities to the South Island.

I am aware that there is some captive breeding carried out by South Island breeders and enthusiasts but apart from that, nothing to bring those with an interest in wetlands and wildfowl together.

At the moment I am considering not renewing my membership with Ducks Unlimited as, from a practical point of view, the only benefit from membership is your excellent magazine.

Yours faithfully,

Pat Robson

Manager/Trustee, Birdlands Sanctuary Trust, Christchurch

aims of wetland enhancement, creation and education, and may in fact attract new people to the cause.

Below is a current listing of DU members in the South Island—enough to perhaps

form several chapters?

Yours in conservation,

Alan Wilks

Greytown (06)304 9729

South Island

DU Members

Steven Abernethy (Dunedin)
Robert Allison (Kaiapoi)
Sally Allison (Rangiora)
Anne Austin (Nelson)
S. Barber (Dunedin)
Richard Barnett (Christchurch)
R. & N. Bensemman (Motueka)
J. & S.H. Bremner (Mosgiel)
Derek Brown (Havelock)
L. H. Cleveland, OBE (Dunedin)
Richard Clay (Leeston)
C. J. Clark (Christchurch)
Donald Goodall (Lumsden)
D. P. Crichton (Christchurch)
Margaret Graigh (Christchurch)
Paula de Jong (Gore)
Marrick Day (Winton)
John Dawson (Dunedin)
M. C. Davison (Wyndham)
Sir Peter Elworthy (Timaru)
Simon Elkington (Twizel)
Murray Gibson (Timaru)
G. W. E. Gardiner (Blenheim)
Bruce Hamlin (Takaka)
J. H. Gordon (Dunedin)
Lyn Glasier (Timaru)
Les Hill (Christchurch)

C. L. Harrison (Christchurch)
O. L. Harkness (Hawarden)
M. L. Jerrard (Christchurch)
Robert Jary (Nelson)
Murray Ives (Mosgiel)
Lady Isaac (Christchurch)
Desmond Horrell (Gore)
Edyth Kerr (Takaka)
Stephen Loach (Dunedin)
Russell Langdon (Ashburton)
Graeme Marshall (Motueka)
Neil Mair (Gore)
Phillip Lyver (Dunedin)
D. W. Lyders (Outram)
R. N. McLachlan (Te Anau)
Duncan McLachlan (Te Anau)
B. McDonald (Wanaka)
Hamish McAllum (Clinton)
Veronica McAuley (Timaru)
A. G. McArthur (Coalgate)
I. J. Morrison (Geraldine)
Cherry Moffat (Timaru)
David Mitchell (Christchurch)
Stuart Mirfin (Nelson)
John McLeod (Dunedin)
P. L. Munns (Ashburton)
R. E. Munro (Invercargill)
O. L. Perkins (Roxburgh)
Lloyd Pearson (Dunedin)



Eve Ritchie (Roxburgh)
D. L. Randall (Dunedin)
A. L. Quayle (Nelson)
P. Rowley (Amberley)
F. Rouse (Blenheim)
Ian Ross (Darfield)
K. Robinson (Invercargill)
Anne Smith (Gore)
Ian Sinclair (Mosgiel)
Peter Sullivan (Lincoln)
S. Studholme (Ashburton)
Chris Staynes (Dunedin)
Wayne Tippet (Christchurch)
D.R. Tilson (Ashburton)
Lindsey Thompson (Timaru)
A. Walker (Wanaka)
Bob Vaile (Arthur's Pass)
Guy Turnbull (Winton)
Murray Williams (Te Anau)
Miles White (Dunedin)
R. J. & J. E. Butts (Takaka)
Tony Martin (Christchurch)
Murray Gibson (Timaru)
L. Harper (Christchurch)
Sue Mullord (Blenheim)
Nellie Noort (Sheffield)

Brown Teal Released on Mana Island

By Alan Wilks

The 45 birds from the captive breeding programme which were destined for the Chatham Islands release which has now been vetoed by DOC because of their new and previously undisclosed disease screening requirements that DU has difficulty accepting, have been released at Karori Sanctuary and on Kapiti and Mana Islands.

The Mana release was planned for 11 August and DOC had invited Gary Thomson and Jim Campbell, who did the wetland restoration work (reported in Flight, October 1998), Kevin Evans (Brown Teal Captive Breeding Co-ordinator) and three DU Directors, Ross Cottle, Neil Candy and myself, to participate.

The weather was unkind on the planned day and the trip was postponed to the following Monday.

...of the many hundreds of brown teal raised and released by DU this was the first time that we had liberated birds into a truly predator-free environment.

Unfortunately, Kevin Evans didn't get the message advising of the change of plan and flew down from Northland courtesy of DOC and spent a fruitless day in Wellington.

The release party left Paremata on a chartered launch around 11 am on a fine clear day. As well as the DU contingent, the party included DOC staff, members of Friends of Mana, representatives from the Conservation Board, and nine brown teal.

Once the contingent had been ferried from the launch to the jetty by zodiac, the birds were carried to the wetland - which was looking great. Te Akapiki Arthur, the Ngati Toa iwi representative on the Conservation Board,



Brown teal being released into a predator-free environment on Mana Island by Gary Thomson and Jim Campbell, watched by Friends of Mana representative Miriam Phillips. Photo: Alan Wilks.

blessed the birds and some of us had the honour of releasing one each.

After a walk around the wetland and a look at the new signage which gives DU plenty of credit and to which DU contributed \$1,000, the party had lunch and returned to the mainland.

For me this was a special occasion, knowing that of the many hundreds of brown teal raised and released by DU this was the first time that we had liberated birds into a truly predator-free

environment. More brown teal are to be released and supplementary feed is being provided.

Brown teal are a native endangered species in decline, the fourth most endangered duck in the world. The population of around 1500 birds is restricted to Great Barrier Island and a few small areas of Northland. The following is from a DOC media release, 14 August 2000:

Conservation Department spokesperson Dr Colin Miskelly said the teal were originally found in the Cook Strait area and establishment of populations on mammalian-free islands was vital for their long-term survival. On the mainland they are threatened by loss of lowland wetland habitat and predation by ferrets and stoats.

“Mana Island Scientific Reserve is undergoing a massive restoration programme and the teal will join a variety of species already reintroduced such as lizards, North Island robins, diving petrels and takahē. Efforts are ongoing to attract gannets to the reserve and more than 300,000 coastal trees have been planted on the island.

“The Waikoko Wetland has also been restored recently, with assistance from Ducks Unlimited, for introduction of species such as the teal”, said Dr Miskelly. Ducks Unlimited has supplied these birds through their national captive-breeders network, the members of which have been breeding brown teal for a number of years for liberation on to islands.



Gary Thomson and Jim Campbell beside signage on Mana Island which provides background information on the Waikoko Wetland and details the process of the restoration in which DU played a major role. Photo: Alan Wilks.

Politics & Ecosystem

Giant Rats of the Air

Canada geese are ubiquitous in countries like UK, achieving a significance which moved columnist Paul Johnson of *The Spectator* * to devote a piece to what he terms "the giant rats of the air".

Johnson's beef with the birds is the carnage they cause in city parks in London like Kensington Gardens and St James's Park. He writes: "Things have been happening on the Round Pond too, which glitters under the sunshine. For years it has been colonised, like almost every stretch of open water in southern England, by that most loathsome of illegal immigrants, the Canada goose (*Branta canadensis*). These powerful strutting creatures - well is that aggressive martial tread called the goose step - are the giant rats of the air..."

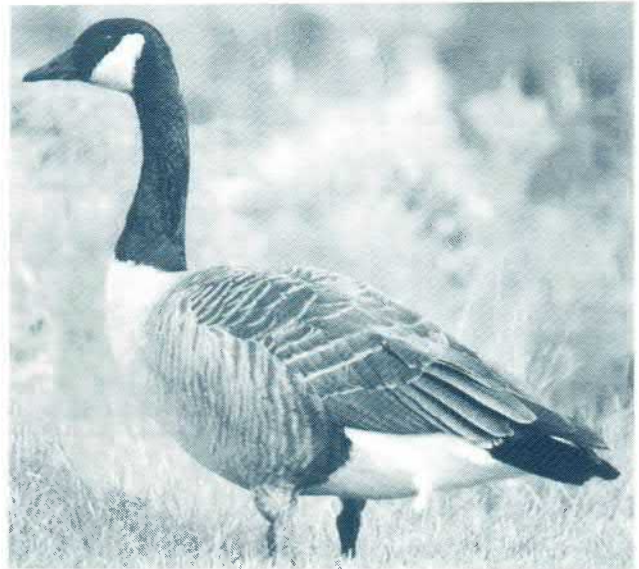
The species are very successful colonists, their numbers doubling rapidly, the females being able to breed for 10 years, and producing six young annually. Johnson goes on to note that the birds are fiercely protective of their young, very territorial and drive off other species.

They eat everything in sight until they are so full they are incapable of flying...

These qualities may well endear the geese to some. However, it is another less savoury attribute of the Canada goose which gets up Johnson's nose (here readers who are squeamish about bodily functions, defecation, bird poop, manure and so on are advised to cover their eyes for a while until the rest of this article has passed): "These geese are notorious for shitting. They eat everything in sight until they are so full they are incapable of flying, then start to get rid of it..."

The result is lumps of green, toxic, slimy droppings littering the banks of the pond and surrounding grass, "causing children and dogs to slither and the stomachs of all to heave..."

The scandal of the Canada geese's doings persisted for years, according to Johnson. Timid authorities, fearing that the excrement would hit the fan, for years refused to take action and cull the offending



birds. Not until the early 1990s did they put things in motion and send in hunters with silenced guns. This halfhearted attempt reportedly removed 100 geese from St James's Park. A more recent purge has had better results and The Pond has experienced a return of native inhabitants - a dozen varieties of duck, and swan which are breeding successfully. Moreover, Johnson notes, "The pigeons, not the best of our citizens to be sure, but at least our own villains, are happy again."

The story is one about which any conservationist will have mixed feelings. Johnson tends to draw more political lessons from the saga: "...I rejoice to see the powers-that-be tackle a notorious problem, which all who know about it agree must be dealt with, in a swift, ruthless, daring, and efficacious manner, and to hell with the critics. Just for once, those in charge have acted *with authority*...."

* " 'Clap your hands!' says Peter Pan as the alien geese meet their doom". Paul Johnson, in *The Spectator*. 3 June, 2000.

Campbell Island Teal

The following is an extract from a letter from Glen Holland, captive co-ordinator at the National Wildlife Centre, Mount Bruce:

"The teal programme has progressed dramatically in the past few seasons with a second captive population now breeding at the Isaacs Wildlife Centre in Christchurch. In

addition we have completed the first two releases on to Whenua Hou (Codfish) Island which is now considered at close to carrying capacity (26 birds). This entire population is destined to be moved to the main Campbell Island once the eradication of rats has been completed. This eradication is planned to start in July 2001 but it will be two years after that before we will get the go-ahead to reintroduce the teal on to Campbell Island..."

Glen continues to say that he anticipates having a surplus of birds next year looking for good homes. The only requirement is that holders have a good track record and the birds are held in a predator proof single species aviary.

For further information, contact Glen Holland, National Wildlife Centre, RD 1, Masterton. Ph/fax. (06)375 8004

New Zealand Wetlands Conservation Awards 2001

The National Wetlands Committee of DOC has issued guidelines for seeking and evaluating nominations for the New Zealand Wetland Conservation Awards for 2001.

The awards are intended to promote the conservation and wise use of wetlands by identifying, recognising and celebrating best practice in wetland management, research and education.

The awards are presented in association with World Wetlands Day (2 February), commemorating the signing of the International Convention on the Conservation of Wetlands, at Ramsar, Iran, on 2 February 1971.

A maximum of five awards will be considered annually, considering nominations for agency projects, private or community projects, educational effort, proven programmes and lifetime personal achievement.

The awards are open to all, and self-nominations may be made. Nominations must be accompanied by appropriate documentation covering such aspects as description of the wetland, a before and after assessment, details of management, repair or restoration, details of how the work was done and the outcomes and the role of the nominee.

Nominations close on 31 October, 2000 and are to be made to the Director-General of Conservation, Department of Conservation, P.O. Box 10-420, Wellington.

Copies of the guidelines for those wishing to make nominations are available from DOC, DU chapters, or members can obtain a copy of the guidelines from 73 Wood Street, Greytown 5953 (06)304 9729.

STEWART ISLAND STOAT SCARE FOLLOWUP

In Flight 103 (Stoats: Ecoterrorists on Stewart Island?) the disturbing possibility of stoats being present on the island was raised following a Forest & Bird media release published earlier in the year.

Stewart Island has rats and wild cats but had been thought to be free of stoats - New Zealand's worst wildlife predator. Forest & Bird was concerned for the fate of Stewart Island kiwi and New Zealand dotterels should the presence of stoats be confirmed.

The presence of stoats on Stewart Island would be a double tragedy because there are many offshore islands which, because stoats can swim up to 1.5km, would be within range of stoats from

Stewart Island. Even Whenua Hou (Codfish Island) would be potentially in danger.

Flight has been monitoring the issue and contacted Brent Beaven, Programme Manager - Biodiversity, of the Stewart Island DOC Field Centre.

Although he had been on leave at the time the original article was published, he responded by email saying that no further evidence that stoats are present on Stewart Island had been found. A sighting of possible footprints at Masons Bay was being followed up and checked for reliability.

Brent Beaven advised that a survey trapping operation had been underway for four months and that the trap lines were being closed down. Over 4000 trap nights had been conducted at each

of five locations across the northern part of Stewart Island. No stoats were caught, suggesting that either stoats were absent, or at very low levels. A specialist predator dog was taken to the island in August to search for stoats and stoat sign. A search was made from Port William to Xmas Village with no stoat sign being found.

The intention was to continue survey trapping every two years. This has two goals: to confirm the presence of stoats; and to monitor the potential population buildup. If a stoat population were to be confirmed, this would put DOC in a position to plan effective management. Brent Beaven said that no control was planned until this was the case. Monitoring for stoats by following up any reports and by surveillance trapping continues. The next trapping session will be in Jan/Feb 2002

Extra Funding for Waikato Wetland

The Department of Conservation's Waikato Conservancy has received an additional \$118,000 for weed control work this year, with more than half the allocation going to willow control in the Whangamarino wetland. Whangamarino is the second largest bog and swamp complex in the North Island and was listed as a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention in 1989.

The new budget is part of Government's funding of the New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy approved earlier this year. DOC's Waikato Area manager Tony Roxburgh says the work will be concentrated in two parts of the wetland.

"There's a 600 hectare area on the peat dome itself where willows are encroaching and blocking out the light for light-dependent native plants such as the endangered native orchid, *Corybas carsei*. The willow is starting to dominate both the canopy and understorey of the peat margins and mineralised zones, and reducing wildlife habitat."

Tony Roxburgh said a further 85 hectares of willow infestation within the Reao Arm of the wetland would be treated to protect 20 hectares of native *Carex* sedgeland.

"Because of willow invasion, twenty hectares is all that's left of what once extended over more than 2000 hectares. It's an area that NIWA has been monitoring for the past two years and, without control, the sedgeland could become locally extinct."

Turning a Profit from Ecological Disaster

Environmental issues have a hard and pragmatic economic side as well as the aesthetic, ethical and emotional. Some schools of thought argue that the free market is the best means of regulating the environment through placing levies on the polluters and resource users. And there are increasing examples of how ecological catastrophes can be turned to economic advantage in their solution.

In North Western Victoria, for example, an organisation is harvesting salts from saline wetland for commercial purposes. Lake Tutchewop, part of the Ramsar listed Kerang Lakes system, is used as a disposal basin by Goulburn Murray Water. The lake, like many in North Western Victoria, is naturally saline and supports a very abundant ecosystem. However, its use as an irrigation disposal basin has concentrated salts in the lake to above natural levels.

In the past, saline wetlands were considered only as degraded environments of no value to the ecosystem. However, the company concerned, Geo-Processors, takes salt harvesting beyond

...saline wetlands were considered only as degraded environments of no value to the ecosystem.

traditional methods. The technology refines salts for the dinner table, but also produces mineral salts such as gypsum and magnesium hydroxide for industrial uses. The saline water is totally consumed in the process, with significant environmental benefits. The demonstration site at Kerang

may be of use to help the community and government agencies understand not only how the technology can be used to address salinity problems, but to value add with a profitable outcome.

On another ecological front, the breach of New Zealand's borders by unwanted species which pose a threat to indigenous species could be something to be turned into a huge economic opportunity. New Zealand could become a world leader in the development of effective biosecurity systems and technology.

Forest and Bird's Conservation Director Kevin Smith says the world is crying out for innovative ways of curbing the global spread of alien weeds and pests. Kevin Smith says he believes countries and companies that take the lead in developing ways of shipping goods and transporting people around the globe free of hitch-hiking alien species will make their fortunes.

The economic harm to New Zealand from alien species is just under \$1 billion a year. The economic cost is bigger in other countries and none can afford to continue suffering these economic impacts and are desperately looking for solutions.

"Instead of looking at alien pest invasions as a bottomless pit for government expenditure, we should be solving the problems and turning biosecurity into a huge economic opportunity," Kevin Smith says.

Technology involving systems to ensure the container trade does not ship snakes, scorpions and other pests around the globe could be sold.

Two New Zealand companies have already taken on the biosecurity challenge. Mount Maunganui-based Genera Ltd. are pioneering the use of a heat treatment system to kill bugs as an alternative to the use of the ozone-depleting fumigant, methyl bromide. The New Zealand-owned Japan Quarantine Inspections undertakes the inspection and cleaning in Japan of used vehicles destined for the New Zealand market.

"An investment in biosecurity technology is a winner all round for a country like New Zealand that is heavily reliant on primary producers and on the tourist appeal of a clean green environment," Kevin Smith says.

"...We should be solving the problems and turning biosecurity into a huge economic opportunity..."

"We will benefit by keeping new pests out of the country, by ensuring our exports gain a pest-free reputation, and by selling biosecurity services and technology overseas."

New Zealand already leads the world in some areas of pest control and eradication. DOC is a world leader in eradicating rats from islands. The Paeroa-based ProHunt company has already won contracts to cull goats on Australia's Lord Howe Island and on the Galapagos Islands.

References:

WetlandLink Bulletin, Issue 3, June 2000

"Profiting from Alien Pest Destruction." Kevin Smith. 19 July 2000 - Forest and Bird website.

Conservation on the NET

As in many other spheres of interest, the internet provides a vast amount of material on practically every aspect of the environment and conservation issues. It's a major source of sharing of concerns, research and education about the world and national environments.

Below are just a few the team producing Flight has found useful. Readers are invited to submit details of sites they find useful and would like to recommend to other DU members.

Email to: artscape@xtra.co.nz.

www.ducks.org

The website of Ducks Unlimited Inc. USA.

www.doc.govt.nz

The website of DOC. Often slow to download, but a good source of information from DOC on New Zealand environmental issues, research, developments and information.

www.enature.com

North American website. Bringing you important events, interesting facts and bizarre behaviour from the natural world. Contains an archive of articles, wildfowl question service, news.

[Http://panda.org/](http://panda.org/)

The website of the World Wildlife Fund. Presents a wealth of information on current international environment issues, a feature archive, email service, and information about WWF and its activities.

www.ens.lycos.com

Provided by Carnegie Mellon University, this site offers up-to-date environmental news and features covering major issues from around the world. Contains archive facility and links to other environmental sites.



**WE
SUPPORT
WATERFOWL
AND
WETLANDS**

**SPORTWAYS
GUNSHED LTD**

49 NORMANBY ROAD

MT EDEN

AUCKLAND

Phone 09 631 5275 09 638 7279



DUCKS UNLIMITED NEW ZEALAND INC.

For Wetlands and Waterfowl

YES, I would wish to join Ducks Unlimited as a member Please send me further information, I may join later.

.....
Title First Name Surname Phone Fax

Address

Membership is available in seven categories:

Junior (under 16) \$10 Contributor \$35 Family \$50 Life (one payment) \$1000

Note: Bronze, silver, and gold sponsorships, which can be changed annually, include the membership fee of \$35.00 inc.GST. For the balance, sponsors will receive a receipt as proof of a tax deductible donation

Bronze Sponsor \$60 Silver Sponsor \$125 Gold Sponsor \$250

My donation of \$ is enclosed. Please find my cheque attached.

Please charge my VISA/MASTERCARD No:

Expires: Signature:

Please renew my membership each year and charge my credit cardYES/NO

ALL DONATIONS TO DUCKS UNLIMITED NEW ZEALAND INC. ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE.



&c.

New Poison Worth Trying

Breeders and wetland developers might consider trying a new poison which is showing good results in controlling possums and rats. Feracol works by increasing calcium levels in the blood and causing heart failure. The product is an oily, peanut butter flavoured paste dyed green to deter birds eating it. It is sold in containers or wax paper bags which can be attached to trees. Feracol kills faster than brodifacoum and its other advantages include the fact that a lethal dose is detoxified in the carcase, reducing the risk of secondary poisoning. No licence is required for using the poison.

(Reported in *Open Space*, Magazine of the Queen Elizabeth II National Trust, No.8, July 2000.)

Encourage Wood Pigeons

The kereru, the native wood pigeon, as well as being a delightfully tame resident of bush areas, is well worth encouraging for its role in assisting regeneration of native forest.

Native wood pigeons are the only species able to swallow and disperse large native tree fruits. They have a vital role in the germination of their favourite food species, many of which require weakening of the seed coat by passage through a pigeon gut.

With their low breeding rate (one egg per pair per season) and declining habitat and predation by rats, mustelids, harriers and mynahs, some areas like Northland are experiencing a severe decline in numbers. Poaching of the large, quiet bird needs to be countered.

Native forest stands with taraire, puriri, miro or nikau are particularly worth conserving as these species are a prime source of food for the native pigeon. Isolated specimens of these trees can be banded to deter possums which will take pigeon eggs.

Conservation by Education

" Sir Peter Scott was a conservation visionary in many different ways. One of his great achievements was to establish education as a key theme for WWT... Sir Peter realised that providing information to people of all ages and from all walks of life was one of the most powerful ways that he could secure the future of wildlife. He also knew that education had to be an enjoyable experience. Once converted to ideas about conservation, people would then be motivated to convert others to the same cause..."

("Making the Link: Research and Conservation," by Dr. Mark O'Connell. In *Wildfowl & Wetlands*. Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, Autumn 2000, Number 133.)



IN FLIGHT

Shopping

AROUND THE POND

FENN TRAP MK 6

Deadly on ferrets, stoats, weasels and rats, these all metal traps are easy to set and are the ultimate quick kill tunnel trap.

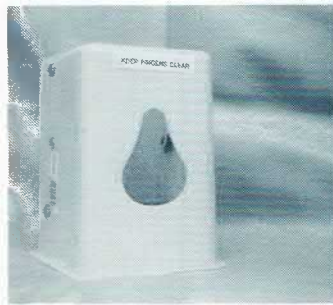
\$30.00 each or \$50.00 pair

TIMMS TRAP

We now stock the well known and effective Timms Trap to complement the Fenn trap. The Timms Trap is perfect for larger animals, such as possums and cats.

Bait with either fruit or meat, depending on your trapping target.

\$40.00



GREY TEAL NEST BOX

As featured in Flight magazine, these grey teal nest boxes come in a prefabricated form ready to assemble and erect on your pond. They come complete with mounts ready to fit to your own post.

\$25.00

ESSENTIAL READING

NEW ZEALAND WETLANDS: A MANAGEMENT GUIDE

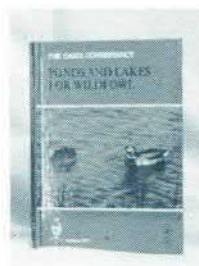
Far and away the most comprehensive New Zealand guide to managing wetlands. This has a load of answers to your questions about how to build a wetland, what to plant, what lives in a wetland, what legal controls apply and where to go for further information. This book is required reading for anyone who is serious about looking after wetlands.

\$25.00

PONDS AND LAKES FOR WATERFOWL

Published in Britain by the Game Conservancy, this book covers the development and improvement of waterfowl habitat with many interesting ideas.

\$54.00



PLEASE SEND ME THE FOLLOWING ITEMS

Name:

Address:

Phone:

PAYMENT DETAILS

I enclose my cheque for

\$ as payment

Please charge my credit card

VISA/MASTERCARD

Card No.

Expires:

Signature:

QTY ITEM PRICE

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

TOTAL \$.....

Prices include GST and Postage & Packing

Tax Invoice Required Tick

Send your completed order form and payment details to:

Graham Gurr,

PO Box 9795,

Newmarket,

Auckland.

Ph 09 489-5337

Please allow three weeks for delivery.

DRAWING: The Pied Cormorant

This strange looking question mark is easy to do...

now draw its reflection and on to stage two.



draw in the body, legs and feet... don't forget the habitat and it'll look really neat!

... A regular feature introducing a simple drawing technique for new wildlife artists.

More commonly known as the pied* shag, the pied cormorant (*Phalacrocorax varius*) is also called the yellow-faced cormorant and its Maori name is karuhiruhi.

The pied shag is endemic and can be seen around sheltered and shallow marine waters and inland lakes and rivers throughout New Zealand. They dive under-water to seek a variety of fish and crustaceans and stay down for considerable periods of time. This water-logs their plumage and shags are often seen on rocks and branches with wings outspread like a coathanger to dry out.

Measuring around 800mm from bill tip to tail, the male and female are alike but the female is slightly smaller. The birds have black and white plumage with a yellow patch in front of their eyes, a long bill and tail and short wings.

The pied shag builds nests of sticks, twigs and debris, laying three or four pale blue eggs two days apart. Both parents take turns to guard the nest until the chicks leave after about four weeks. The chicks are fed by the parents for up to 80 days.

"Pied" means partly of one colour and partly of another colour.

Illustration republished courtesy of Alan Fielding.

Flight ECOFILE

Plastic: An Ecological Nightmare

Plastic may be an immensely useful material, but our use of it pays no regard to the ecological downsides. Many types of plastic do not break down in the environment once they have been disposed of. These plastics are an ecological nightmare.

Plastic is used in practically everything and everywhere. Twelve billion plastic bags are handed out to shoppers in Britain every year. Large UK chains like Tesco's and Sainsbury's alone each hand out a billion.

Most plastic ends up in a landfill site. It will never biodegrade. If, in the future these sites are excavated, billions and billions of bags bearing supermarket and other logos stamped on the side will be found.

Recycling plastic bags is difficult. One problem is that a variety of plastics exists which cannot be recycled together. Contamination or mixing of plastics may render the product of recycling unusable, and even when successful, plastics can only be recycled a few times. Certainly the bags we use today are highly unlikely to be recycled. Of the 15 million plastic bottles used in the UK every day, less than 3% get recycled. The Mediterranean seabed is becoming increasingly "plasticised". Half a kilometre down, plastic bags float on the bottom in densities of up to 80 items per hectare; and 550 plastic bottles per kilometre were recovered in a recent survey of Bristol Channel coast. Even on the beaches of uninhabited South Pacific islands, plastic bags waft up and down the shores. Plastic bags have clogged up the pumps at Indonesian water refineries. Turtles in the

Bay of Biscay die of ingestion of plastic bags. Seabirds too, have been found to have plastic fragments in their stomachs, and plastic molecules in their muscles. In California it is not uncommon for sea-lions to end up in rehabilitation centres with plastics wrapped around their necks. Where cattle eat plastic bags, they suffer ulcerated stomachs. The cattle may die and their corpses decompose, but the bags will live on.

Plastic waste as a serious environmental problem is easily solvable. We must reduce our use of plastic and use non-disposable bags to carry shopping, or simply refuse a bag when we buy something. Our obsession with wrapping everything in plastic is unnecessary and environmentally deadly.

Toxic Toys

Some problems with plastic arise before it is disposed of. There is mounting concern about the safety of plastic toys, with a ban on soft plastic toys being considered in Europe. The European Parliament has challenged European Union governments to strengthen a ban on phthalate softeners in polyvinyl chloride (PVC) plastic toys proposed by the European Commission. The concern arises from the use of toxic phthalates in all toys that children of any age could feasibly put in their mouths.

The parliament's position would have enormous consequences for the toy industry, although which toys would classify as suckable is far from clear. There is controversy over studies and methods of measuring how fast phthalates escape from toys when they are sucked and efforts are under way to develop reliable testing methods. Greenpeace, which has mounted a fierce

resistance to the plasticisers in soft PVC toys, welcomed the parliament's stand. Greenpeace said a simultaneous pledge by the European Commission to investigate the impacts of phthalates from other sources such as PVC flooring and medical devices showed it has understood that "toys are just the tip of the iceberg." References:

"Why we need to end our obsession with plastic wrapping." Sasha Norris, The Guardian, August 16, 2000
Lycos Environment News Scan, July 2000.

Pacific Islands Wetlands

Popular images of the Pacific are of coral reefs and lagoons and coconut palm-fringed white sand beaches. The reality for many communities throughout the South Pacific is dependence on wetlands as a source of life. Solomon Islands freshwater wetlands and mangroves are essential providers of building materials, fish and crustaceans. In Fiji, freshwater ponds sustain water plants crucial to traditional weaving practices.

While most wetlands in the South Pacific are coastal, the freshwater wetlands of the smaller islands support many endemic plant and animal species. The vast river wetlands of the Sepik and the Fly in PNG sustain abundant populations of migratory and territorial water birds.

With most South Pacific land and inshore marine areas under customary tenure, there are strong links between communities and their wetlands. Population pressure, economic development, climate change and pollution make it vital in many parts of the Pacific to find ways to protect wetlands so that they continue to be a source of life, culture and income. [From WWF Pacific website: www.wwfpacific.org.fj/]





WINCHESTER®

MORE THAN A NAME. A LEGEND.



Marketed in the North Island by Kilwell Sports Ltd
and S&R Marston in the South Island.



Waikoko Wetland - Mana Island. Photo: Alan Wilks.

Proud to support Ducks Unlimited
New Zealand Inc.
in their efforts to conserve
New Zealand's wetlands and waterfowl