

# Flight

---

J  
U  
L  
Y

2002

ISSUE 112







wetland care  
NEW ZEALAND

**Wetland Care New Zealand's mission is to: 'Harness community, business and government resources to restore and develop lost wetland areas within New Zealand.'**

#### Funding

Funding for projects comes mainly from the Waterfowl and Wetlands Trust, which was established 12 years ago and has underwritten wetland development projects to a significant level. Extra resources have

come through fundraising and corporate sponsorships like that from Banrock Station Wines. Wetland Care New Zealand actively seeks funding from private and public sources for its work.

#### Partnerships

Central to Wetland Care New Zealand's mission is forming partnerships with people and organisations with similar aims. Alliances are being established with conservation groups like DOC, NZ Fish and Game, Forest and Bird and regional councils.

#### Taking Care of Wetlands

Wetland Care New Zealand's current and completed projects and partnerships include:

Ashhurst Domain Project - Manawatu

Camm Brown Teal Wetland project - Northland

Home Lagoon Project - Wairarapa

Karori Sanctuary Wetland Development - Wellington

Magill Wetland - SH1 Reporoa

Mana Island Brown Teal Wetland

Pearce Wetlands - Wairarapa

Sinclair Wetlands - Otago

For further information, please contact:  
William Abel - Director, Wetland Care  
New Zealand (04) 478 4335

## NZ Native Forests Restoration Trust

The trust was founded in 1980 following the destruction of the giant totara forests at Pureora and is now well recognised for its visionary approach to the protection of our declining native forests. The trust has since bought and protected nearly 5,000 hectares of regenerating native forests.

The continuing loss of our wetlands is also an accelerating environmental disaster (see the article 'Swamp Thing', *The Listener*, 30 March 2002). Increasing numbers of life-style block subdivisions pose a new threat to the integrity and health of wetlands, and the education of landowners is a priority. As a voluntary organisation, the NZ Native Forests Restoration Trust is not in a position to undertake this role - it can only lead by example, and welcomes anyone wanting to assist, financially or physically.

#### Mangarakau Wetland Appeal

A recent bequest has secured two major areas of wetland - a 68ha sand dune-impounded wetland on the Mahia Peninsula, Hawkes Bay, and one of three titles to a 160ha raupo / baumea wetland of national importance at Mangarakau in North West Nelson. Formerly a kahikatea / pukatea swamp and still a functioning wetland, the Mangarakau swamp has suffered the depredations of timbermillers, goldminers, coalminers, flaxmillers and farmers. Luckily many of its endangered species have clung on tenaciously and the trust aims to restore it to a state that will enable them to survive and thrive. The total purchase price for the three titles is nearly \$460,000. The bequest has enabled the trust to purchase one for \$165,000, and it asks for help to raise the remainder.

For further information contact:

NZ Native Forests Restoration Trust,  
PO Box 80-007,  
Green Bay,  
Auckland 1007.



#### Quoting . . .

In the midst of winter  
I finally learned  
that there was in me  
an invincible summer.

*Albert Camus (1913-1960)*

# INSIGHT

*Neil Candy*  
*President*

*It is always great to hear good news. The case in point was Jim and Simon Campbell winning the Wellington Region's Supreme Farm Environment Award. The recognition is well deserved. Jim has for many years set a prime example of what can be achieved with foresight and a lot of hard work. Of course lots of prospective sites and a trusty bulldozer are also an advantage. On behalf of all members of Ducks Unlimited, congratulations Jim and Simon and thanks for the publicity you gave Ducks Unlimited.*

*In the last Insight I reported the destruction of the Ashhurst viewing platform. The insurance company has come to the party and a new amenity is now being built, hopefully from less flammable materials. The reconstruction is being handled by the Palmerston North City Council, as the building was under their jurisdiction when it was torched.*

*For the continuing Lake Waikare saga, see DU News.*

*Hamilton July 19-21 - have you registered for the AGM yet? It should be a great weekend. Saturday's bus trip includes visits to some of the major wetlands in the Waikato area, Lake Waikare among these, and here we will be given a full run down on proceedings. Something new on the Friday will be a sporting clay target shoot, and I have it on good authority that while some of us will be just out for a good time, others are hoping to 'kick butt'. If you have never attended a Ducks Unlimited AGM before this is your chance to see some major wetlands, make new friends and have a great time.*

*We have allocated this year's Banrock Station grant to the creation of a wetland at Masterton Intermediate School. Gary Thompson carried out the work under Jim Campbell's supervision. According to reports it has turned out very well, and twice the envisaged size. Tony Sharley from Banrock Station, Australia, visited the site recently and was thrilled with the end result. This looks promising for future funding from this source.*

*Once again, if you haven't enrolled for the AGM please do so now. I look forward to seeing you there.*

## CONTENTS

### Special Features

<b>2002 Conference Programme</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Wetland Care Report</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Award Winners</b>	<b>10</b>

### Regular Features

<b>Our People</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>DU News</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>InFlight Predators</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Flight Ecofile</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Shopping</b>	<b>15</b>

## 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: Pateke family at Waikoko Wetland, Mana Island.  
Photo: Jason Christensen*

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

Editing & Production: Juliet Oliver, Box 82, Greytown  
E-mail: [julieto@xtra.co.nz](mailto:julieto@xtra.co.nz)

Printer: Lamb-Peters Print,  
106A Main Street,  
Greytown.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Co-patrons

Lady Isaac, QSM, Christchurch  
Norman Marsh, Reporoa

### President

Neil Candy, Palmerston North a/h (06) 376-4448

### Chairman

Craig Worth, Hamilton a/h (07) 854 0494  
(07) 846 8719

### Vice-president

Ross Cottle, Masterton (06) 378 7408

### Treasurer

Graham Gurr, Auckland (09) 489 5337

### Directors

William Abel, Wellington (04) 586 2752  
Ossie Latham, Auckland (09) 483 7401  
David Smith, LLB, Auckland (09) 298 4719  
Alan Wilks, Greytown (06) 304 9729  
Jim Law, Pirinoa (06) 307 7855  
David Wilks, Wellington (04) 476 2242  
Steve Rice, Auckland (09) 528 4560





# OUR People



## Max Voss

Max was born in Palmerston North and attended Longburn Primary and Feilding Agricultural High Schools. He is married to Charmaine and they have a son of 15 and a daughter aged 11. He and his wife run a beef farm partnership at Tiakitahuna, near Palmerston North. Max and his family joined DU in 2001.

After leaving school he worked at various jobs in Sydney and London. When he came home he worked in the freezers at Longburn Freezing Works, a job he held for the next 14 years, during which time he bought the farm.

Between 1972-76 he travelled widely, in Australia, Asia, Europe, North Africa and South America.

His interests include building large models of sailing and battle ships, and taxidermy, which he has been doing for 20 years. After doing small animals and deer heads he now sticks to ducks and pheasants. As he goes about his work he enjoys seeing the bird life on the wetland he has been developing.



The wetland at Tiakitahuna. Photo: Max Voss

Our farm is situated at Tiakitahuna, 10km south of Palmerston North, and backs onto the Manawatu River. We are fortunate to have an oxbow lagoon on it, which would be approximately four hectares with a maximum depth of two metres. The lagoon is land-locked, so the water level fluctuates according to the amount of rain in any one year.

Our first effort at wetland development was in 1986, when I sprayed the raupo at one end where it had taken over. Then in came a digger, which dug out as far as possible working backwards, creating two islands on the way. We planted a double row of poplars on the bank to shelter the area from the prevailing winds. Once this was established, we planted pin oaks for colour and golden weeping

willows that branch down into the water creating a marvellous habitat for ducks.

Recently we purchased the far end of this lagoon, which consisted of old and dead willows, mai mais, pine trees, goats rue and fescue, etc. After developing one end of the lagoon we could see the potential to develop this end, so another project began. I sprayed the whole area with Roundup and six weeks later burnt it off. Then a digger and bulldozer came in and everything was taken out and burnt or buried. The digger dug the soil out and the bulldozer took it away. The job seemed to get bigger and bigger, so a second digger was brought in, and after two weeks the job was finished. The lagoon was considerably widened and deepened, and two islands were created. The next year we had a motor scraper and a bulldozer in for four days to finish the job completely.

A shelter belt of pines, gums, poplars, willows and flaxes has been planted round the area and once these are established we intend further planting to enhance it.

We funded the project ourselves at a cost of around \$25,000.

Although we have opened up the area it has had no effect on the birdlife whatsoever, as there are regularly large numbers of mallard, paradise, shoveler, teal and grey ducks, black swan, dabchicks, pukeko, Canada geese and shags. On top of these we have the royal spoonbill, heron, coot, dotterel and an occasional bittern.

The enjoyment we get from seeing all this while running our farm daily is extremely rewarding, and we fully appreciate the value of an oxbow lagoon.

- Max Voss



## Tim Byrne

Tim was born in Wellington where he still lives with his wife Melissa and their daughter Rox. He was educated at St Pat's College in Wellington, and his career spans film, video, public relations and counselling. His interests include tramping, conservation and a long association with wetlands and waterfowl, inherited from his father Jack, who was a much published author, well known to waterfowl enthusiasts. Tim has been a DU member for three years, and the Byrnes enjoy weekends at their Wairarapa property. (More about their wetland on pages 8-9.)

*If you would like to be included in this column, please choose one of these amazingly easy options. All photographs will be returned:*

- drop a note to Flight, c/o 73 Wood Street, Greytown 5953

- phone/fax Alan (06) 304 9729

- send an email to the Editor: [julieto@xtra.co.nz](mailto:julieto@xtra.co.nz)





## Lake Waikare Appeals Settled

At 3:00 pm on Friday 7 June 2002, the last working day before the appeal hearings were to begin, settlement of Ducks Unlimited's appeal was finally confirmed.

Settlement has come three years after DUNZ first objected to the renewal of the consents to the operation of the structures that operate the flood protection scheme for the lower Waikato. Our objection was based on Environment Waikato's refusal to positively address the environmental effects the scheme has

had, and continues to have, on the lake and on the Whangamarino swamp.

DUNZ will be part of a Lake Care Group, which will oversee research, trialling of options and fencing the Matahura Stream - the source of the silt in the lake.

Come to Conference for the full story. More in the next Flight!

- David Smith

## Board Business

*Re:* Notice of Motion to change the name of Ducks Unlimited New Zealand Inc.

At the last AGM a notice of motion was made and seconded from the floor of the meeting. In the April 2002 Flight, the proposer of the motion made some comments in support of his motion. In response:

The name of the organisation has been reviewed many times by the Board over the past 10 years. Three years ago an intensive review was conducted by members of the Board, which resulted in the creation of Wetland Care as a brand that we would use to market our efforts in wetland restoration, separately from Ducks Unlimited. We were thus able to gain the support of Banrock Wines, with sponsorship in place on an annual basis, currently \$10,000 per year. This was fully reported in Flight January 2001. The objective was to run with this brand for a number of years and evaluate it on an ongoing basis to determine the effectiveness of the strategy. A briefing for members was held at the last AGM on the Sunday. Unfortunately the proposer and seconder of this motion were not present at this briefing.

Any change at this time would not allow for a proper marketing evaluation of the effectiveness of this strategy. After 28 years it would be irresponsible to change the name of an organisation only to have to reconsider a couple of years later because the desired result was not realised. As the proposer says, branding and marketing are vital to the health of any organisation. However a change would not be effective without thorough testing and market research. This is exactly what the Board has set in motion with Wetland Care.

In the April Flight, the proposer of this motion mentions the tag 'It's Not Just The

Ducks' that DU Canada uses in its publicity, ignoring the fact DUNZ has used 'For Waterfowl and Wetlands' on everything we produce, for the last 25 years.

Ducks Unlimited is one of the most successful and respected conservation organisations in the world. Any change we consider locally must be done carefully, gradually, and with proper evaluation.

**It is the recommendation of the Board that members do not support the proposed motion.**

## New Membership Category

We have received some inquiries from small companies such as farmers who wish to charge their subscription to their business. Consequently, the Board has decided to introduce a Business Membership at \$75 including GST.

## Annual Reports 2002

Please refer to the insert in your copy of Flight 112 for annual reports from the Past President, Treasurer and DU Project Coordinators.

(Please note: The Wetland Care annual report features on page 8. In future we will report on the year's activities in Flight's July issue. -William Abel and Neil Candy)

## Members in the News

- Read more about Jim and Simon Campbell and the Farm Environment Awards in the feature on page 10.

- Adrian McIntyre (see story, Flight 111) has received one of the Merit Awards for the Southland region in the same competition, 'For outstanding wetland enhancement.' The judges were particularly impressed by both the beneficial social and environmental impacts and the water management of wetland areas that Adrian

has achieved on his property. Congratulations, Adrian.

- Stew Morrison, a DUNZ life member, has been appointed Chairman of the new Wetlands International Board of Directors. From 1969-1995 Stew was Executive Vice President of Ducks Unlimited Canada, where he was responsible for a budget that grew to C\$70 million. For the last two years Stew has overseen the reorganisation of Wetlands International's activities in the American region and played a leading role in promoting the recent global changes in Wetlands International.

*(From Wetlands, the newsletter of Wetlands International, December 2001)*

## Outdoor Recreation Enters Politics.

- Former DU member Stuart Mirfin of Nelson has recruited energetic family members and friends to form a new political party, Outdoor Recreation NZ, 'to protect and enhance the heritage of outdoors sportspeople for future generations'. As he commented in a letter, without people interested in both hunting and wetland preservation, there would be limited numbers of wildfowl remaining in New Zealand by now.

Stuart grew up on the family farm in the Rough River valley, near Ikamatua on the West Coast, a river known internationally as one of New Zealand's finest wilderness trout rivers. His enjoyment of and determination to protect our natural resources began in childhood.

Stuart believes that if outdoor sportspeople unite with one political focus and use the MMP system, the party will gain list votes in the next general election. Support has been excellent so far, with over 2000 people joining up in the first two months. The party has a website at

[www.outdoorrecreation.co.nz](http://www.outdoorrecreation.co.nz)





# 28th Annual Conference

**Alcamo Hotel, 290 Ulster Street, Hamilton, 19-21 July 2002.**

Rooms have been reserved for the Friday and Saturday nights. If you haven't registered yet, please do so now, we need to know immediately.

**Full Registration** includes the wetland bus tour, lunch and wine tasting; Saturday night dinner and auction; AGM and morning tea: \$80.00 per person. (Other meals are not covered in the registration fee.)

Saturday night dinner and auction only: \$35.

Room deposit: \$50.

Send your registration and payment to

P.O. Box 9795, Newmarket, Auckland.

Conference inquiries: Ray Hayward (07) 855 2205

## Conference Programme

The supreme Auctioneer and Raconteur Bob Wood has agreed to conduct the main auction so we can guarantee a very entertaining evening. Any silent or main auction items would be appreciated, contact Ray Hayward, (07) 855-2205.



Friday midday: 50 target DU National Sporting Clay Championship, hosted by Hamilton Gun Club, starts 12 noon. Medals for first three places in ABC and D grades, \$2 sweep. Entry fee DU members \$30 (please do not include this with registration), non-members \$35 (limited to the first 50 entries).

For further details, phone Ray Hayward (07) 855-2205, or Jack Worth (07) 846-3808.

7.00pm: Happy hour in the Alcamo House Bar.

Saturday 9.30am: Bus departs for tour of Hopu Hopu Grey Teal Project, Lakes Whangape, Waahi, Rotongaro, Waikare and the Whangamarino Swamp, with lunch at Cooks Winery.

7.00pm: Drinks in the bar.

8.00pm: Shooting prizegiving followed by award presentations, dinner and main and silent auctions.

Sunday 9.30am: AGM

## The Wetland That Wasn't

Late last year we awarded the MacMaster Trophy and Grant to Tararua College at Pahiatua, to assist with the development of their wetland project (see January issue).

The College recently advised us that the project has been wound up owing to a number of factors. The Waireka Habitat Committee, which was to have raised the funds and administered the wetland, was never formally established and the person who drove the project has moved away from the district. No one else is prepared to take on the responsibility and the College feels it doesn't have the resources to continue. Also, the ponding area was not holding water after heavy rain and further expense was required to seal it.

They are now substantially out of pocket; the planting which had been done has been dug up and the area levelled; it will be replanted. We share their disappointment that the project has not gone ahead.

The trophy and grant have been returned and we now seek another worthy recipient.

## Wairarapa Chapter

Our AGM was held on 24 April, and Miles Anderson was elected as Chapter Chair.

A dinner and auction is planned for late September; members will be advised.

Concern was raised about the condition of parts of Lake Wairarapa, and a sub-committee was formed which will approach DOC to discuss the issue.

John Flowers reported that they had trapped 32 ferrets on their Gladstone property in the last three and a half years.

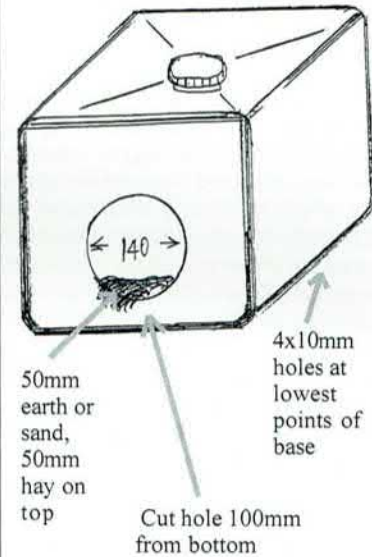
## Operation Gretel

DU (Waikato Chapter) is placing 100 nesting containers in maimais to encourage mallard, greys and teal to nest and hatch their offspring in a much safer environment. Losses from flooding, predation, human encroachment and other sources takes a heavy toll and this trial at very little cost could be another way to increase duck numbers.

The species mentioned can begin nesting in early July and run through to December, subject to weather patterns. The trial will be monitored by DU members, but we would also applaud any effort by others. A sketch (see right) gives an idea of what you will need. The DU drums should be placed out of the rain if possible, against a wall, with the entry unimpeded. We will be happy to supply details if you would like to be part of the project. We will also send you our nest box inspection form for recording purposes.

- Jack Worth, 151 Newcastle Road, Hamilton; phone (07) 846 3808.

## 20 litre drum



## NEW CONTEST - YOUR photo could WIN!

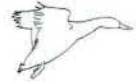
Bruce Lambert and his small staff at Lamb-Peters Print transform Flight from a pile of densely-typed pages and a heap of photographs into the excellent, collectible product you have before you. Bruce has generously agreed to donate a colour print on good quality A3 card (twice the size of this page) as a prize for the best photograph printed in each issue. A panel of experts will choose the winner, whose name will be published in Flight. We would like to see the best of your water and bird photographs, including early ones, and travel shots, panoramas and portraits of birds. Junior members, we would love to see yours, and drawings, too.

As we sometimes need extra photos, this is also a cunning plan to amass a collection of good images for future use, and the archives of DU achievement will benefit greatly.

For Flight 112 we received a superb photograph of pateke at Mana Island. We have therefore made a unilateral decision and are pleased to announce that Jason Christensen, Field Centre Supervisor on Mana Island, is the first winner of the 'LP Print'. His photograph is on the cover of this issue. Congratulations, Jason, your print will be posted to you.

Now it's over to you. Let those films roll...





## Mana Island Brown Teal Update

(see The BT Report, Flight 111 page 7)

Jason Christensen, Mana Island Field Centre Supervisor, has made one or two corrections to Sue Moore's report in the April issue of Flight, and sent some news items. This is a summary of his letter:

In the 2000-01 season, seven ducklings hatched and only two are known to have died before fledging. The other five were at fledging age, but as they are not monitored closely, we assume that they all fledged.

It is not quite correct that there are fewer black-backed gulls and pukeko on Mana than on Kapiti Island. The February 2002 census showed a resident population of 1015 black-backed gulls and about 500 pukeko. Mana also has a resident population of four to six harrier hawks.

A harrier was observed recently, circling young teal; their parents were going to town and the ducklings were diving for cover. The next day the same family went about their feeding on the water while a

harrier paid no attention, in a tree only 10 metres away. Its presence didn't seem to worry them.

In the 2001-02 season, 27 ducklings are known to have hatched on Mana, with the latest six found in late April. Thirteen have hatched in the last two months. A dog survey is planned for late May.

The birds are left as a wild population and are only monitored as we pass the ponds. Only two pairs feed there on a regular basis - one on the pond beside my house, and two males at the top of the island.

We are putting up a hide for visitors below the Waikoko wetland signs, which DU helped to fund. We will be encouraging people to record both sightings and sittings. We have also made more teal covers of cut brush, bent over the water, on ponds near the summit, to create habitats away from Waikoko. The two males have settled in on the central pond up there, and were using the new covers as soon as we moved away.

## Otorohanga Kiwi House

A reasonable breeding season for the brown teal with 15 juvenile birds waiting to be transferred. Good numbers of both grey teal and NZ scaup hatched this season. Only one pair of shoveler bred, both clutches failed. One clutch was deserted during a period of bad weather while the other appears to have been interfered with, possibly by the kiwi.

## Whio at Peacock Springs

We had a successful breeding season, with the added pleasure of hatching and rearing Orana Park's ducklings. Their male had only been flock mated with our resident female three months previously - he was only 10 months and she 20 months old. Our own young pair were starting off well in their second season, but we had some problems which provided valuable knowledge about rearing blue duck in captivity.

We lost our older female after four breeding seasons, although the last two seasons had produced clear eggs. She suffered from an arthritic problem and treatment was unsuccessful. Her death was a blow - being a wild-caught female her genes were a valuable asset for the future of captive blue duck.

Our young pair, also flock mated at Peacock Springs, bred for the first time last season, both birds at 20 months old, their first clutch producing eight eggs. The four fertile ones were put into artificial incubation on day 31. All four ducklings hatched well. At four months they were physically examined, screened and fitted with dummy transmitters to prepare them for release into Mt Egmont National Park later.

Orana Park's first clutch was seven days younger than ours and produced four fertile eggs out of five, which were put into artificial incubation on day 28. Three ducklings hatched well but the fourth was very lethargic and unable to hold itself up. Our vet suggested a vitamin deficiency, so it was given a subcutaneous injection of Multi B and vitamins A, D & E. It improved incredibly fast and one hour later was behaving normally.

Orana Park's ducklings were put in the brooder room with our older ducklings, but they found it hard to compete for food for a couple of days. Weights were checked regularly, and they soon began feeding well. As with our bluiers, once they reached juvenile stage they were examined, screened and fitted with the dummy transmitters. Unfortunately one was found to have damaged his lower mandible beyond repair, and we had to euthanase him.

Our second clutch produced six eggs of which the five fertile ones hatched, three healthy but two were very lethargic and died overnight. This problem also occurred with our young pair in their first season, with post mortem reports showing nothing. We decided to supplement the diet of the three survivors with live food on their water, using water boatman, which they loved. However, on the fourth day we noticed that one duckling was eating only the boatman, ignoring the pelleted diet, and had become lethargic. It was force-fed and given vitamins with Doxycycline, but unfortunately it died. Five days later a second duckling was having difficulties walking. We thought it could be a calcium-related problem, from eating mainly boatman. The duckling died from haemorrhage after an intra-muscular calcium supplement injection.

We had not had this problem before, not having fed water boatman before - but to see the ducklings' strong instinct to take only live food in water, you can see why many do not survive when left in aviaries with the parents. We will now keep to the original diets and add only mealworms on the pelleted food. The surviving duckling is a healthy female.

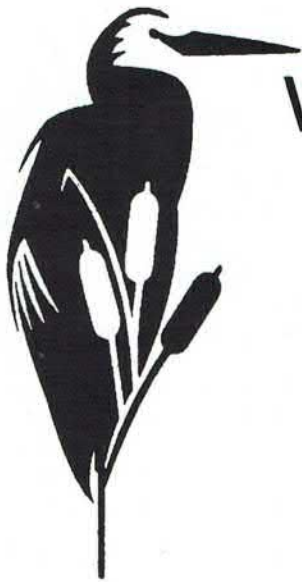
Orana Park's second clutch produced five eggs with four fertile. One was kicked from the nest; three hatched well and were put in with our second clutch, which we had begun feeding with boatman. The same thing happened. We force-fed and injected one with Multi B and vitamins A, D and C. It also died immediately from haemorrhage after the intramuscular injection. We now know that the injection must be subcutaneous, not intramuscular - the post mortem proved they have virtually no breast muscle at this age. Unfortunately one of the remaining two ducklings died aged four weeks through human error. The survivor has grown into a healthy male and is held with our second clutch female in the meantime. Next season any lethargic newly hatched ducklings will be given the vitamin supplement by subcutaneous injection.

The juveniles to be released were all cleared for transfer to Mt Egmont National Park and released on 28 February 2002. We were told they jumped straight on to the rocks, negotiated the rapids well and began feeding immediately. DOC has not re-captured them for weighing at this stage as they are visibly very healthy. This success is wonderful news, and after all the disappointments it inspires us towards further success for blue duck at Peacock Springs next season.

(Adapted from a report by Tracy Dawe, Wildlife Office, Peacock Springs.)

*The Isaac Wildlife Trust Phone (03) 359-9145 Christchurch.  
From NZ CmaG News, January 2002.*





# wetland care New

**W**etland Care has been very busy on wetland development work in the last few months, mainly in the Manawatu and Wairarapa regions. Projects we have completed in association with members include:

- John Dermer (Feilding), a 6 ha development comprising a series of ponds down a valley, to be fully fenced and planted as a habitat.
- Graham Christensen (Rongotea), a 1ha addition to the 2.5ha conservation area previously built.
- Geoff Reid (Mikimiki), with a 4th pond adding another 2ha to the conservation area being developed in the Tararua foothills; it is fenced with deer netting.
- Ross Cottle (Masterton) and Tim Byrne (Masterton)

We have assisted with some funding and advice for these projects, with members providing the balance. There have also been several where our resident wetland specialists were only required to provide their expertise.

We have just completed the excavation of the wetland at Masterton Intermediate School. This project is the 2001 Banrock Wines sponsorship. We are all thrilled to be involved in a wetland that will inspire and foster in the school's pupils the conservation ethic we hold so important. Banrock Wines are to be congratulated on the sponsorship of this project. Tony Sharley of Banrock Wines has visited the site and was most impressed. An official opening is planned for August.

Jim Campbell and Gary Thomson completed the project and within budget made it larger than expected. Ross Cottle, national vice-president of Wetland Care, who helped with the project, said that the pond, almost 1ha in size, is now full. The school's own troop of pekin ducks settled in first, with mallards and Canada geese now using it. The local community is supporting it enthusiastically with offers of trees and planting materials that will make the wetland a major asset for Masterton. The school will use it as an outdoor science classroom, and pupils will benefit greatly from the practical work they do in developing the wetland.

Masterton Intermediate Principal Fraser Mailman said that the wetland is a wonderful addition to their existing farm of chickens, sheep, bees and a trout hatchery, and that it will be an education resource available to all Wairarapa schools.

Wetland Care has several other projects in the pipeline at present, and I look forward to reporting on these in future issues.

- William Abel

*(With extracts from a  
Wairarapa Times-Age  
report, 25 May 2002)*



*Tenants await pond developments;  
Jim and Gary at work at Masterton  
Intermediate School. Photo:  
Linda Feringa, Wairarapa Times Age.*



*The wetland at Masterton Intermediate, looking south-east.*



*Sparks Park, June 2002.*

## Sparks Park

Carterton people planted 2500 daffodil bulbs at Sparks Park on Queen's Birthday Monday (see story in January Flight), with more still to plant. Carterton District Council has also donated an oak and a flowering cherry to mark the Queen's 50th Jubilee and commemorate the life of the Queen Mother.



# Zealand - Annual Report 2002

## The Jack Byrne Wetland

The story begins many years ago with my dad who gave me many gifts, two of them being the sense of inclusion in his world, another a sense of the natural world. He supported my purchase of the land in Te Whiti, Wairarapa, which had a swamp remnant, and could see what I thought the property had to offer. Although he isn't here to see it now, I know I wouldn't be there without his support and encouragement. That's why we've called the development the Jack Byrne Wetlands or Jack's for short. He was never one for grand titles anyway.

All areas of natives trees and the swamp were promptly fenced off and the last ten years has seen us planting totara, matai, maire, kanuka, manuka, rimu, kowhai, cabbage trees, flaxes and toetoe, encouraging regeneration, and transplanting. This has seen a marked increase in bird-life including pukeko, tui and fantails. In the swamp we saw the prompt regeneration of pukio and other sedges.

In 1999 we invited Jim Campbell and Alan Wilks to the property to see what they thought of the swamp area for further wetland development. It was wonderful to experience their encouragement, support and advice on



Third pond, waiting for water. Photo: Tim Byrne.



Part of the Jack Byrne Wetland, June 2002. Photo: Alan Wilks.

how best to achieve our aim. Jim has been awesome. He came and did the initial excavations on his trusty bulldozer, and quite frankly, the wetland wouldn't look as it does today without his foresight, knowledge and hands-on approach. Wetland Care agreed to put money into this project, which has given the project the push it needed to come to fruition. Our next stage of planting, which will be natives, will happen over the next three years, by which time we will be ready to start on stage two of the development.

The wait for the digger has been very worthwhile. Gary Thomson and his son Jamie have done a sterling job, each contributing ideas on how best to achieve the desired result. And they left the area looking very tidy.

Our neighbours have been peeking at progress and I would like to assure others out there hoping to re-establish wetlands and NZ forest that although our neighbours seemed sceptical at first, they are now planting natives and fencing off remnant areas.

And now we are waiting for water.

- Tim Byrne

## Wetland Subsidies - For the Records

As it is not possible for us to check regularly on all the projects we have subsidised or which Banrock Wines have sponsored, it would be of real interest to us to receive a few lines and some photos of progress (these will be returned) about members' developments. These records will help us to encourage others embarking on the same path.

Contact: William Abel,  
316 Maungauraki Rd.,  
Lower Hutt,  
Ph. Home 04-5862752.

## The Cottle Wetland Takes Shape Near Masterton



The underground pipe is found. Photo: Ross Cottle.



'It must flow that way...' from left: Jamie Thomson, Gary Thomson, Ross Cottle.



# Wairarapa Wetlands: A Winner



Jim Campbell at Rameslie. Photo: Pete Nikolaison.

This year saw the inaugural Ballance Farm Environment Awards in the Wellington and Southland regions, following from the success of these awards in the Waikato. Widely-respected Wairarapa DU member Jim Campbell and his son Simon have earned the Supreme Award in winning both the Best Sheep and Beef Farm and the Habitat Award, with their 525 hectares of medium hill country at Mikimiki, near Mt Bruce.

Jim's grandfather started the farm in 1935 and since that time they have added an extra 200 hectares to the original block. Simon took over management of the property in 1999, although Jim still has a hands-on role in the running of the farm.

They run 1400 Romney ewes, 250 red deer hinds and 190 Angus/Hereford beef cows. They breed all their own replacements and in recent years have been buying in replacement hinds as they increase deer numbers. Around 70 hectares of the farm is deer fenced.

The first pine plantation was planted in 1964 and harvested in 1995. Further development saw shelter planting and a race system during the 1970s-90s and nut trees planted in 1978-79. Pond creation had begun in the 1970s and has continued in most years since then. Pond and river fencing has been done when finance and floods permitted. Parts of the farm are fertilised in RPR product because it lasts longer and is friendlier to the soil, and Jim says it also applies a lot of lime, which keeps soil organisms happy. The Campbells'

sheep come in for some top class shearing each year as some of the Golden Shears hopefuls get in extra practice during the competition. Simon says they should have kept a visitors' book to record trips made by greats such as Colin King and Snow Quinn. This year three finalists, David Fagan, Digger Balme and Dean Ball, were in the woolshed.

Draining development in Jim's college days was with draglines sitting on wooden pads to stay above water level.

The farm has an extensive array of ponds and wetland areas, which Jim has developed in the past 40 or so years. They are all well planted with both native and deciduous trees and Jim says the autumn colours are simply brilliant.

The farm has little native bush and Jim says he is guilty of bulldozing huge old kanukas and manukas in the early days. 'They were treated as weeds, now I wish I'd left them,' he says. However, ever since Simon can remember, his father has been busy replanting kanuka, along with many other native and exotic trees.

All the naturally boggy wetland areas have gradually been fenced off and planted up, so the farm now has around 30 reasonable sized ponds, supporting not only a huge array of water birds, and other wildlife, but also providing shade and shelter for stock. Some steeper land has also been retired and planted up.

Jim says that in days gone by, one particularly bad bog used to drown around

half a dozen ewes a year, even when they were checked frequently, so retiring the area was the only sensible solution. Other very wet areas along fence lines have been retired, which makes for easier mustering.

The trees and water features have made a wonderful environment for people to work in, but Jim says they're also a valuable food source for birds and bees. A commercial beekeeper has hives on the farm, and the flowering gums and tree lucerne, which flowers when nothing else does, are particularly useful assets.

There are also 60 varieties of flax on the farm, which were given to Jim by Gisborne flax expert, Renee Orchiston. 'They're all catalogued and described, 'with a story about each one,' says Jim.

Jim says they're improving the environment all the time, with a more recent project being the planting of shelterbelts along fence lines to give more protection for stock. To break the look of straight lines they are using a mixture of trees with different heights, width and shape.

At the end of a day, Jim is able to envelop himself in the peaceful beauty of the farm by living in a lodge built above a lha pond. From here he can feed the ducks and keep a good eye on the rarer species. There are six other ponds nearby, giving superb reflections from the trees in autumn.

Ducks Unlimited started in NZ in 1974. Jim joined in 1976, served as a director on the Board for several years, and was elected President in 1985. One of the highlights of his seven years as President was to



represent NZ at three conventions in Canada. Some great friendships were established and several major financial contributions were made to DUNZ from both Canada and the USA. Chris Morrison, the son of the Vice President of DU Canada, spent five months at Rameslie working alongside Jim. He also got a whirlwind tour of NZ as they delivered brown teal as far north as Kerikeri for release into the wild, and as far south as Invercargill to deliver mute swan as part of Operation Royal Swan.

This interest explains why you will see scaup, grey teal, shoveler, black and white swan, mallard, Carolina wood duck, and a breeding pair of the endangered whio, or blue duck on the wetlands at Rameslie. The whio are part of a nationwide breeding scheme where any progeny are released in Taranaki. Last year they hatched ducklings, but they didn't survive, probably because of bad weather, Jim says.

Jim's favourite occupation is creating or restoring wetlands, and he has toured Wairarapa from Hukanui in the north to

Lake Wairarapa in the south with his trusty Allis Chalmers HD5 dozer. Another important habitat he worked on was the restoration of Waikoko Wetland on Mana Island, in conjunction with DOC staff Robin Gay and Jason Christensen. Gary Thomson of Eketahuna also spent six weeks working on the island, which is now predator free. The resulting success story is 27 brown teal or pateke ducklings bred this season from birds reared by DU members and released on the island.

Through his DU connections Jim spends considerable time visiting farms and talking to people about wetland development and protection. He has gained much of his knowledge in working on major wetland projects around New Zealand, as well as on a study trip to Canada where he looked at control structures being used in Manitoba wetland areas. He says he learnt a lot there about building dams and retaining walls, and about ways to get from lake or dam levels down to river level without the area scouring out. He is now passing his knowledge on to

others, including the Wellington Regional Council.

Jim and Simon are 'well along the way' in fencing off the Waipoua and Te Mara rivers that run through the farm. Jim is hoping for regional council funding to complete the job, as the farm could be used to show others what can be achieved when waterways are fenced off and planted up. This reduces nutrient run-off, provides shade and shelter for stock and helps to control the wandering habit of the rivers. Jim says they are winning slowly against the rivers, but occasional floods have still wiped out fences and trees. Simon says that once areas are well established they seem to hold quite well, and in very badly eroded areas they've used a lot of quick-rooting poplar poles.

Jim has also developed an area of nut trees for cropping, although this is strictly a hobby. He says hazelnuts, walnuts and chestnuts cope well with the high (2500mm) rainfall of the area. Many of the nuts are given away, and they also provide useful prizes for the fundraising auction at the DU Wairarapa annual dinner.

## The Ballance Farm Environment Awards



*Jim and visitors at the Rameslie Field Day.  
Photo: Wairarapa Times Age.*



*Jim's corner of the world. Photo: Pete Nikolaison.*

The Farm Environment Awards were established in 1993 as a joint initiative between the Waikato Conservation Board and Environment Waikato. In 1995 an independent Trust was set up to administer them. Trust members include representatives from EW, Doc, Conservation Boards, Federated Farmers, Dexcel, AgResearch, Waipac, Forest and Bird, and the Farm Forestry Association.

Since then the awards have been held annually in the Waikato and have significantly promoted sustainable farming practices throughout the region. The Waikato region had 41 farms entered in their 2001 competition and over the last nine years over 300 farmers have entered.

The key objectives of the awards are to encourage sustainable land management and to display to farmers that profitability need not compromise, and in fact can restore and enhance, environmental values. The awards look at whole farm systems and strongly promote the positive. Every entrant is given feedback from the specialist judges, in the form of a written report. Once you have entered, a team of judges will visit your farm to talk about what you do. They're not there to scrutinise or criticise your farming operation - it's designed to be a positive experience for everyone, an exchange of information and ideas and a chance for farmers to get information and advice from the various judging representatives.

Through feedback and profiles of the winners, the awards encourage other farmers to be more pro-active in their resource management by providing them with good role models for sustainable land management.

Following the success of the Waikato competition, the Farm Environment Trust, which owns the awards, works in partnership with Ballance Agri-nutrients and ANZ Bank as the major partners in each region. Category sponsors vary from region to region, and each Regional Council co-ordinates the competition in its area.

The Trust wants the awards to become a high profile nationwide competition, and a National Trust, representing all regions and sponsors, is being developed. The awards have been held in the

*Continued on page 12*



## Pet Ferrets Banned

Pet ferrets have been declared an unwanted organism under the Biosecurity Act. Conservation Minister Sandra Lee said when she made the announcement, 'Put simply, the ferret is an unwanted predator anywhere in New Zealand,' Ms Lee said. The ban will exempt current pets and existing ferret farms that largely export their animals overseas, but no new farms will be permitted, and no pet ferrets can be bought, sold or bred. The ban will be effective from June, after the Biosecurity Amendment Bill 2001 is passed into law.

Source: *The Dominion*, 30 March 2002.



Continued...

Southland and Wellington regions for the first time this year. Next year the competition will be held throughout New Zealand and regional winners will compete for a National Supreme Award.

Please contact your regional council if you need more information or would like to participate in the 2003 Ballance Farm Environment Awards.

Note: Merit Award winners in the Wellington region alone indicate the range of initiatives recognised by the 2002 Farm Environment Awards:

Ray and Lyn Craig, Masterton, for their efforts in using biological controls; Peter and Monique Leerschool, Carterton, for excellent examples of habitat improvement on their property; Jonathon and Melanie Smith, Waikanae, for their protection of natural areas through QEII Trust covenants; David Holmes, Masterton, for extensive erosion control planting; Jenny, Selwyn, and Gordon Taylor, Carterton, for sustainable land use on their dairy run-off, and the Akura Conservation Centre, Masterton (Manager, Peter Cameron), for an innovative recycling scheme.

(With thanks to David Cameron and Adie Long, WRC Masterton, for their help with this article -Ed.)

## Court for Ferret Walkers

Boat owners found exercising their pet ferrets on a beach at Great Barrier Island in January this year are being prosecuted (see April Flight). The island was made predator-free after a multi-million dollar programme eradicated exotic pests. The maximum penalty for bringing animal pests into the Controlled area of the Hauraki Gulf is a fine of \$100,000 and a jail term.

Source: *The Dominion*, 20 May 2002.

## Stoat Research

In November 2001 the Conservation Department published a third report on its stoat research programme, which was started in 1999 with funding of \$6.6 million over five years. The programme aims to find more cost-effective and sustainable approaches to stoat control, and is overseen by an advisory group representing DOC, Lincoln University and Auckland University.

Its main aims are:

- to make stoat control more cost effective where it is already successful
- to develop new, realistic techniques for control in more and larger areas
- to expand the arsenal of methods to ensure sustainable control and benefits
- to begin new, longer-term projects with potential to increase the effectiveness of control.

The report, 'What's happening with stoat research?' is available from DOC, Box 10-420, Wellington. DU members may be interested in the research summaries on traps, and on baits, lures and toxins.

## Hunting a Kiwi-killer

Amazing Grace, a young kiwi who defied death twice before she was 10 days old, was found dead along with three other kiwis two months ago, in the Kaweka Ranges of Hawkes Bay. Grace achieved fame last year in hatching from a severely predator-damaged egg and later surviving an operation to remove hardened yolk from her stomach. The deaths occurred in the 800ha Boundary Stream Mainland Island Reserve, which since 1996 has been under intensive control measures including patrols by a specially-trained dog. On evidence from the autopsies DOC staff members are hunting for what they believe is a single ferret. The three other birds, all males, had reached adult weights of about 2kg. Seven kiwis remained in the reserve and two more which were to be released will be held until the threat is gone.

A ferret's ability to kill adult kiwis is well-known. Conservation officer John Adams reported that in similar incidents in Northland, one ferret killed five adult kiwis in three months before being trapped. The deaths highlight the threats birds face on the NZ mainland - even in areas with intensive predator control programmes in place.

Source: *The Dominion*, 18 May 2002

## And now...

The Conservation Minister announced that DOC will spend an extra \$1.77million on kiwi sanctuaries this year as part of a five-year rescue plan. Five sanctuaries have been established on the mainland, covering more than 40,000ha and dramatically increasing the survival rate of kiwi chicks through intensive pest management. Forest and Bird conservation manager Eric Pyle has predicted that kiwis outside sanctuaries would be extinct within 15 years.

Source: *The Dominion*, 6 June 2002



### Note:

The price of the Battlatch gate advertised in Flight 111 is \$250 including freight + GST.

We apologise for the omission -Ed.

## WANTED TO BUY

**A pair of Carolina Wood Ducks  
and a pair of Mandarin Ducks.**

Contact Craig Worth  
BlueWorth Coachlines/Hamilton City  
Buses Ltd

57 Higgins Rd, PO Box 5095,  
Hamilton, New Zealand.

Private Fax +64 21 789 512

Mobile +64 21 925512

E-Mail [craig@blueworth.co.nz](mailto:craig@blueworth.co.nz)



## A New Plan Proves Popular

'We passed through the most primeval forest of any that I have seen in New Zealand.' (William Colenso, in 1846)

The Mt Bruce National Wildlife Centre in the Wairarapa is on the edge of the last 1000ha remnant of what European settlers called the Seventy-mile Bush, which once stretched from north of Masterton to Norsewood. Intensive milling and fires destroyed huge rimu, totara and northern rata - passengers coming by ship to Wellington in the early 1900s could sometimes smell the smoke of New Zealand bush fires before land was sighted. Until recently only 65ha had been protected. The Wairarapa conservation community has been celebrating the setting up of The Rangitaane Trust, a three-way joint venture between the community-backed National Wildlife Centre Trust, the Department of Conservation and the Rangitaane people. On 15 May the entire roll of the little Mikimiki school entertained guests when local MP Georgina Beyer opened the centre's new \$320,000 resource room. The children then led the way to a clearing where four young kaka wearing radio transmitters were released into the forest. The new trust now aims to make the remaining forest predator-free so that birds including kaka, kokako and possibly kiwi can be released to breed in the wild. Their inspired 'Sponsor a hectare of pest control for \$25' scheme appealed to the public so much that it took off before it could be officially launched in early May. By the end of April, supporters had 'snapped up' 200ha, many paying for three years and one for the next 24 years. Then with internet publicity, another 300ha was sponsored in the following six weeks, raising over \$30,000 and attracting overseas interest (a Swiss family who had visited two years ago sent \$500 for pest control over 10ha). As well, all profits from a new CD of birdsong from the Pukaha/Mt



From left: Steffi Campbell, Sean Hayes and Eleni Turnbull perform at Mt Bruce. Photo: Wairarapa Times Age.

Bruce forest and its accompanying book will help fund the project. Sponsors (you can even pick your very own patch of bush) are still sought.

For more information contact: The National Wildlife Centre, Mt Bruce, RD1 Masterton, phone 06 375 8004, or send an email to Mike Grace, Community Relations Manager: [mgrace@doc.govt.nz](mailto:mgrace@doc.govt.nz). The website is at [www.mtbruce.doc.govt.nz](http://www.mtbruce.doc.govt.nz)

(We will bring you regular updates from the Mt Bruce National Wildlife Centre - Ed.)

## Biodiversity boosted by Environment Enhancement Fund

A diverse and passionate bunch of Cantabrians has received around \$100,000 from Environment Canterbury to restore native biodiversity throughout the region.

The group - including farmers, conservationists and business people, from Kaikoura to Waimate, are the first recipients of the new Environment Enhancement Fund.

Twenty-seven projects across the region received grants from the fund for environmental projects including bush protection, wetlands restoration, native planting and stream fencing. Successful applicants received a maximum of \$5000 per project. Around \$235,000 of environmental protection will take place, with around 40% of the work being paid for by Environment Canterbury.

The fund was launched last year in response to national concerns about the loss of indigenous biodiversity - the variety of plants, animals, fungi and micro-organisms unique to New Zealand. The key to preserving biodiversity is the protection of natural habitats, and in Canterbury the focus is on protecting waterways, wetlands, coastal dune systems and native vegetation and habitat.

ECan chairman Richard Johnson says the fund provides a chance for Cantabrians to improve the natural character of their districts. 'As a community, we must take responsibility for the loss of our natural habitat and act locally to stem the tide. Environment Canterbury cannot work without support; we rely on enthusiastic Cantabrians to help protect our biodiversity.'

Environment Canterbury hopes to allocate \$150,000 each year for projects in Canterbury from the Environment Enhancement Fund, from 2004.

For further information please contact: Phil McGuigan, Resource Care Manager for Environment Canterbury, ph (03) 365 3828, extn 7070.

## Update on Lead Poisoning

This third international report reviews the large-scale environmental problem of lead shot ingestion by waterbirds. The report is based on responses to a Wetlands International survey from nine international organisations and 75 countries. It addresses the current state of legislation and describes levels of awareness, co-ordination and research. It also reviews relevant developments since 1995. The report concludes with recommendations about lead shot to governments, NGOs, hunters' associations and weapons manufacturers.

The report can be downloaded free at <http://www.wetlands.org/news> or contact: [Beintema@wetlands.agro.nl](mailto:Beintema@wetlands.agro.nl)

From *Wetlands*, the Wetlands International newsletter, December 2001.

## A Decision for the Future

The Government has decided that lead shot for waterfowl hunting will be phased out over four to five years. This will begin next year in selected DOC and Fish and Game wetlands. Use of lead shot is being phased out internationally, and New Zealand is following Britain, the USA, Canada and Australia.

Lead shot is an internationally recognised environmental contaminant. It poisons waterfowl, which eat it as grit to digest food. The pellets are reduced into lead salts that are circulated in the blood to vital organs, which can sometimes lead to death within days. It can permanently damage the bird's physiological processes and make it susceptible to disease and predators. It has been reported in NZ waterfowl for 50 years, and in studies done between the 1970s and 1990. In the last two seasons, Fish and Game has surveyed nine regions and found an average of 8% of ingested lead - as it disappears from the bird's gizzard in about 20 days, these averages relate to very short periods. Further analysis of blood lead levels has indicated that mallards probably ingest pellets throughout the year - the studies show that very high numbers of ducks could be ingesting lead. (What about people? Ed.)

Source: *Wairarapa News*, 1 May 2002



# Clippings

Planting suggestions from Fish and Game. This is far from an exhaustive list.

If in doubt seek expert advice.

**Shelter:** alders, coprosma and pittosporum species, olearia, kahikatea, cabbage tree, mahoe, ribbonwood, manuka and flax.

**Low cover:** at the water's edge - carex, long grasses, rushes. Raupo is not recommended due to its tendency to invade open water.

**Amenity, food and cover:** oaks (pin, turkey, English, sessile, holm, red and willow), maples, berry trees (cherries, white mulberry, chokeberry, hackberry), ash, dogwoods.

**Damp areas:** swamp cypress, black tupelo, kahikatea.

Note that many native species also provide food for birds.

**Planting Guidelines**

The wetland should be attractive to you. Planning will help decide the mix of trees: tall and short, deciduous and evergreen, flowering and non-flowering and colour for all seasons. Diversity planting will lead to a more natural, botanically healthy and attractive wetland.

**Identify your priorities** - shelter, cover, food or amenity. Plant trees and shrubs suited to your location and if possible choose locally sourced plants. They will do better in the local conditions and ensure your pond fits well into its environment.

Plant a mix of trees and shrubs in groups rather than a ring around the edge that will

impede flight paths. Make sure plantings conform to natural features - plant along gullies and ridges, not across them. Choose suitable trees and shrubs to blend in with cover species, and choose a variety of plants that will fruit at different times of the year and provide a continuous food source.

Don't plant on the dam wall. Roots will become seepage lanes and weaken the dam. Don't plant pampas grass as it provides ideal shelter for possums, rats, stoats, ferrets and weasels.

Just take rushes and sedges, for example. These wetland plants look so much alike that it's hard to believe there are 47 species (16 native) of the Juncus species of rush and 94 species (73 of which are native) of Carex, the most recognisable of the sedges. Most of these are found in wetlands.

(From the NZ Fish and Game website: [www.fishandgame.org.nz](http://www.fishandgame.org.nz))

## Granite for Glamorous Gardens?

A TV1 news item on 2 June reported that a west coast businessman has been given a permit by the Buller District Council to take 800 tonnes of stones from the beach near Granity over five years. He plans to sell the stones to garden shops in Auckland and

Australia. One beach resident said that the application had not been advertised for objections and commented on how fragile that stretch of the coast has become. Another man pointed to the beach beside his house and explained that there were once two paddocks and a bank to cross before you reached the sea. Reportedly, an environmental impact report had only been commissioned after the consent was given.

## Wellington Regional Native Plant Guide

An extremely well designed and illustrated booklet, packed with useful information on the best plants to choose for different zones around the region.

Cost \$2.50; contact your local WRC office. The booklet is also available from a large number of outlets in the Wellington region.

## Just a spoonful of sugar...

Mahatma Ghandi walked barefoot most of the time, which produced an impressive set of calluses on his feet. He also ate very little, which made him rather frail, and with his odd diet he often suffered from bad breath. Did this make him a super callused fragile mystic hexed by halitosis...?

## It happened like this . . . .

Freedom, a kereru or NZ native wood pigeon, came into my life as a young fledgling which had fallen from his nest. He turned out to be a major challenge for me, needing a feed at least four times a day of green peas, corn and raisins. He objected every feed time, so after a few weeks of life in a carrying cage in my dining room, I decided to give him more space in my large aviary, where hopefully the doves and pigeons would teach him to eat by himself.

A few weeks later he had learned to fly - but still would not eat on his own. He was losing weight, so I made the decision to release him, hoping that nature would take over and he would learn to survive.

The big day came. I took him down to the bush. He flew up into a ponga, looked at me while I said my goodbyes. I felt so guilty walking away, and thought of a verse I have always loved: 'If you love something, set it free. If it comes back it's yours. If it doesn't, it never was.'

Well guess what - he is mine. Two days later I found him sitting on the aviary roof looking very dejected, so I put a handful of peas up there. He came straight over and ate the lot. I couldn't believe it. This continued morning and night for a week, then one day I stood there and called 'Freedom!' He flew straight out of our kowhai tree, landed on my shoulder, walked down my arm and ate the peas from my hand.

I can't explain in words the magical feeling of having this beautiful bird fly to me so trustingly. It was absolutely awesome. Freedom soon began to visit me three times a day for his handful of peas (preferably minted). My husband fell for him as well, and there was a race to the peas.

A month later Freedom brought a mate home with him. I named her Fancy and now she too sits on my arm and feeds from my hand. This is so great, considering that she's a truly wild wood pigeon.

- Gail Simons, Stoney Oaks Wildlife Park, Inglewood.



Gail's two-year-old granddaughter Charlotte Ridley feeds Freedom. Photo: Gail Simons.

(We welcome your stories for this column and would love to hear from junior members too - Ed.)



## Shopping

### NOSLOC FEEDERS

The Nosloc feeding system has been developed in New Zealand by Dennis Colson of Te Kuiti. The feeders are suitable for duck feeding and free range feeding. Of most interest to DU members will be the duck and pheasant feeders. Different nozzles are available for feeding grains such as wheat and barley or for feeding maize. Other sizes of nozzle are available for feeding pellets to ostrich and emu. The nozzles are made of galvanised steel and will not rust or break from use.

Each feeder requires a waratah and bucket (20 litre) which you supply. Larger drums can be used for the system but require additional brackets and waratahs.

The nozzle, either parallel for maize or spiral for wheat and barley, and a waratah mounting bracket are supplied.

**Nozzles are \$26.95 each (please advise spiral or parallel) and waratah brackets \$26.95 each, post brackets \$21.95 each.**

### FENN TRAP MK 6

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

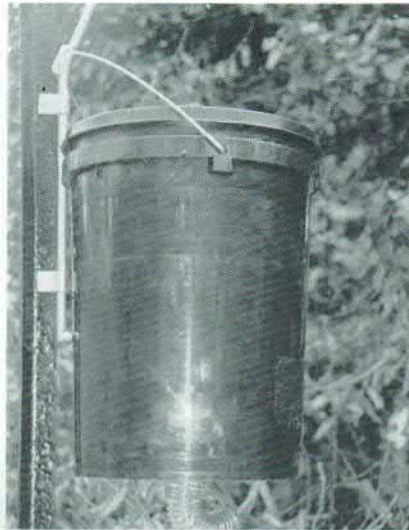
**\$35.00 each.**

### 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**



### 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**

### Orders to:

Ducks Unlimited  
P.O. Box 9795,  
Newmarket, Auckland.

### THE POEM

When I Think of Sidi Rezegh:  
New Year '97  
For Donald McDonald 1912-1942

...you were caught  
in the act of rubbing sleepless eyes  
out there in the desert

I'd like to think you too, could have gazed  
along  
the edge of dawn this year, rising off  
a thermal, spiralling after that  
hawk, across the valley  
before leaving for work, retired maybe  
and honing skills learned on shingle road  
back paddock, or after dark  
behind the hall

I'm trying to make sense of black stars  
the cyclone's eye, and the book of lamentation  
such a big planet to be lost on, with  
no known secret of flight

- Pat White

From 'Drought and other intimacies',  
published by Steele Roberts 1999.

*(Note: Donald McDonald was wounded in battle at Sidi Rezegh, during the desert campaign of World War II. He was captured at El Alamein and died when the Allies torpedoed the Italian ship in which he was being transported as a prisoner of war.*

*This poem also marks the recent death in Australia of the last Gallipoli veteran. Ed.)*

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

Title..... First Name..... Surname.....

Address.....

Phone..... Fax.....

E-mail.....



**DUCKS UNLIMITED NEW ZEALAND INC.**

For Wetlands and Waterfowl.

All subscriptions include GST. Membership is available in seven categories:

Junior (under 16)  \$10 Contributor  \$35 Family  \$50 Business  \$75 Life (one payment)  \$1000

Note: Bronze, silver and gold sponsorships, which can be changed annually, include the membership fee of \$35. 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 card ..... YES/NO

Post to: Ducks Unlimited, P.O. Box 9795, Newmarket, Auckland.

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