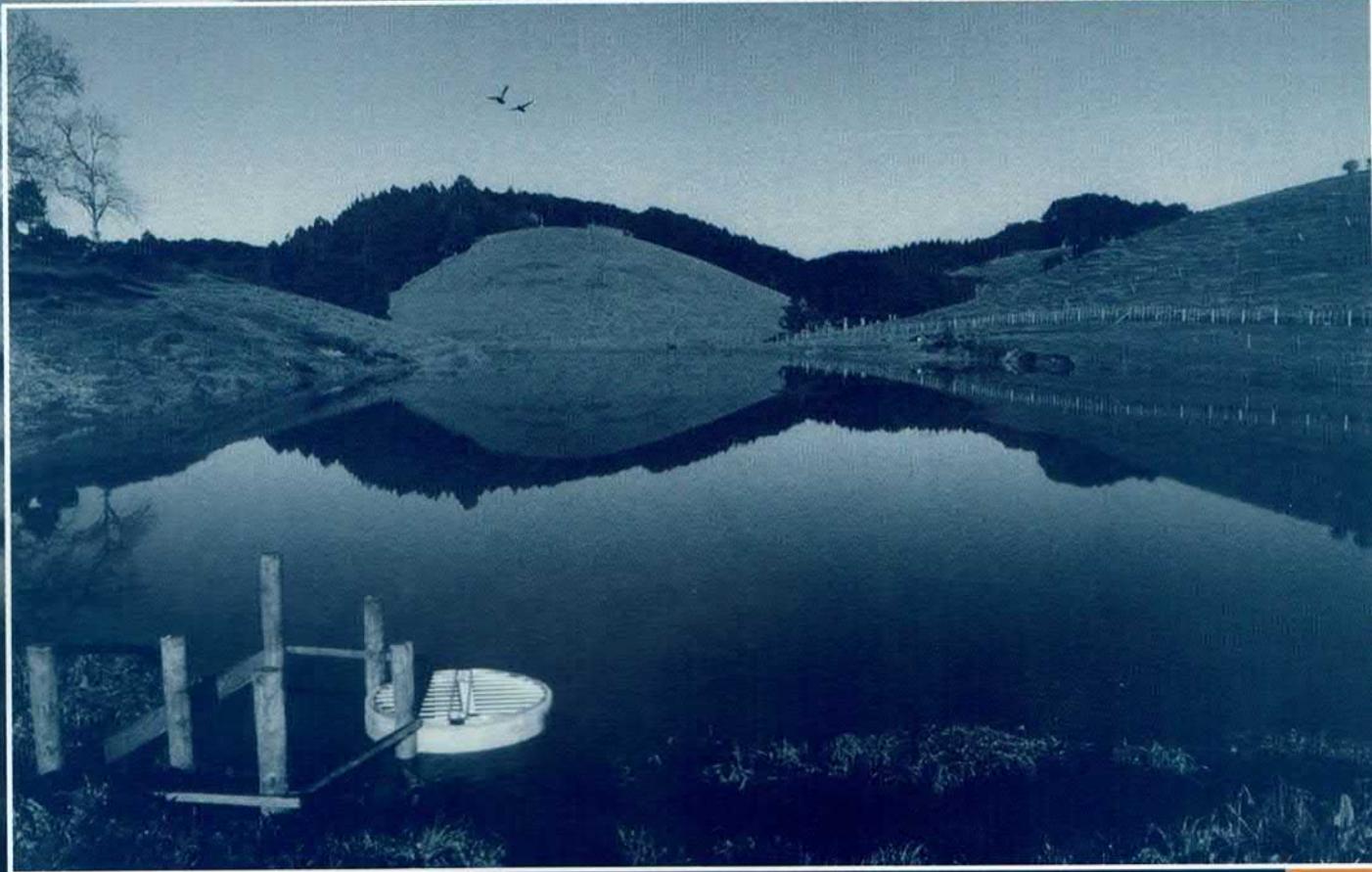


Flight

OCTOBER

2003

ISSUE 117



DUCKS UNLIMITED NEW ZEALAND INC.

www.ducks.org.nz

For Wetlands and Waterfowl.



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 in 1991 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 Wetland - Manawatu
- Camm Brown Teal Wetland - Northland
- Home Lagoon - Wairarapa
- Karori Sanctuary Wetland - Wellington
- Magill Wetland - Reporoa
- Mana Island Brown Teal Wetland
- Pearce Wetlands - Wairarapa
- Sinclair Wetlands - Otago

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

Matuku Wetland Receives 2003 Grant

It was announced on 14 July that the Royal Forest and Bird Society's Matuku Wetland near Auckland will receive more than \$15,000 under the unique Banrock Station-Wetland Care NZ partnership. This is the third such donation made by Banrock Station Wines in New Zealand, following those made to the Karori Wildlife Sanctuary in 2001 and Masterton Intermediate School last year.

The 120ha Matuku (bittern in maori) Wetland is a good example of the region's original wetlands. Threatened species such as bittern and spotless crane live in the wetland, which has plenty of reed beds providing good cover. It is also a potential experimental release site for pateke. The money will go towards continued pest control (especially for mustelids), a pontoon and an observation tower for public viewing. Sponsorships such as this are invaluable for helping to improve wetland health, supporting education programmes and promoting the value of wetland conservation to visitors. (See back cover photo - more in the next issue - Ed.)



From the Flight Desk

We received some great member contributions this time, thank you all very much. And now, wetly here, spring is sprung with that first glorious green in the willows. The grass is riz and da boidies iz — massive schools of starlings and magpies whirling and shrieking around the place, maybe looking for their nest sites in some now-felled old macrocarpas. Four and twenty blackbirds and a thrush or three, a scrum of sparrows; fantail, grey warbler, silvereve, yellowhammer, tui...deafening the dawn.

Do you think the Jeep people could be invited to sponsor Wetland Care's work, if their 'hundred and fifty acres of uninhabitable swamp' advert sells lots of Grand Cherokees to juvenile bog-busters? Maybe someone could invent a fill-as-you-go-with-marsh-gas engine for them as well ...

And names again - do you ever find it slightly tedious trying to explain to people that Flight is not an airline magazine? The glazed-eye effect can occur when you then try to explain both Ducks Unlimited ('Oh... so it's all about shooting?') and Wetland Care (you've lost a few by now). I think that Flight, your promotional journal as well as a newsletter, needs a name that better reflects what you do, and appeals more to the growing number of wetland-conscious people out there. We want it to be a coffee table magazine! I'd prefer something that highlights what you actually do. Here's an excerpt from an interesting recent letter from DU member Tom Nelson Parker:

'Who wants unlimited ducks. What does that mean? Most Kiwis are townies. They imagine ducks as those greedy things in parks that poo everywhere. They don't want unlimited ducks. Conservation is about balance, not things unlimited... The UK had the Wildfowl Trust now the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust. They have been through the same identification process, trying to widen their image to include not only the bird but also its habitat. That's just what DU should be doing...'

Perhaps the 30th AGM next year would be a good time for a change?

Juliet

INSIGHT

Neil Candy
President

What a great weekend!

The annual conference in July was in my humble opinion a roaring success. Everyone was in a positive mode and glorious Rotorua weather certainly helped to keep everyone happy. More than sixty delegates attended the AGM on Saturday morning and then all crammed into the bus for an eagerly awaited wetland tour. It is inspiring to see such wonderful wetlands and to find that not everybody is draining the country. A big thank you to Dan and Lois McGill, Dave and Anne Johnston and Mark Newcombe's 'Gang of Ten' for allowing us to wander all over their wetlands.

It was a pleasure to present Lifetime Service Awards to two stalwart members of DUNZ, namely Dave Johnston of Reporoa and Jim Campbell of Mount Bruce. A highlight for me of being actively involved in DU has been getting to know people of this calibre. The conference also gave us a chance to catch up with Tony Sharley from South Australia. He had spent the previous week touring New Zealand giving presentations on Banrock Station's wetland philosophy, why they are actively pursuing it and the results they are achieving in eight different countries.

One discussion point of the conference was the long-term future of Ducks Unlimited NZ. There was general agreement with the Board's decision to re-assess the direction of DU and create a strategic plan for the next five years and beyond. With this in mind, if any members have expertise or ideas to facilitate this process, please contact your nearest director or write to Box 9795 Newmarket Auckland, and make your views known. Another point raised was the absence of chapters in the South Island. It was suggested that a dinner and auction be held in the Nelson area where we have had previous interest. If this is successful we can build from there. Sounds like a real good excuse for a holiday to me!

The 2004 AGM will be the 30th DUNZ conference and to give all members plenty of notice it is to be held in Palmerston North, probably in late July.

Neil

CONTENTS

Special Features

Banrock Station Grant to Matuku Wetland	2
2003 Conference Report	5
Tapp Wetlands Project	8
Lifetime Service Awards	10
Beginner's Luck	11

Regular Features

Our People	4
DU News	5
Bird Talk	12
In Flight- Predators	13
Flight Ecofile	13
Shopping	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 photograph: The Kauri Wetland almost full, 7 August 2003.

Photo by Lois Tapp (see story page 8)

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

Deadline for all copy and illustrations, Flight 118: 15 November
Flight Advertising Rates (excluding GST)

Full page \$224, half page \$112, quarter page \$56, eighth page \$28.
Waterfowl adverts are free to members. Please contact the editor with any suggestions or to book a space.

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

Editing & Production:
Juliet Oliver, Box 82, Greytown. Phone 06 304 9160.
E-mail: julieto@xtra.co.nz

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

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Patron

Lady Isaac, QSM. Christchurch

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



First view of ducks on Spring Lake.

Matthew Wyeth

A member for two years, Matthew was born in Masterton and grew up in the area. He was educated at Wairarapa College and Lincoln University. He and his wife Lynley farm near Masterton. After leaving school Matthew worked on farms in the Wairarapa and North Canterbury, then completed the two-year Diploma in Farm Management course at Lincoln. He then worked on a station in West Otago before coming home to manage Spring Valley at Kaituna, west of Masterton, for a year. He then share-farmed the property for two years then purchased it in 2001.

His interests are scuba diving, hunting and duck-shooting, golf, squash, moto-cross and of course farming. Matthew's recent interest is in creating and developing a magnificent wetland on the farm.

Spring Lake

During March this year Matthew and Lynley Wyeth created an outstanding wetland area on their property. The area had been in rushes and an acidic peat bog almost a metre deep, with four major springs. Using two bulldozers and a large and small digger they have developed 1.3ha of open water in the main pond which they call Spring Lake, a 0.3ha pond and four small pot dams. Construction costs were \$7000 including a Wetland Care subsidy.

The main lake has four islands, two strategically positioned to protect the wall from wave-lap. The water source from the springs produces 2.5 litres per second. About 40% of it is very shallow, shelving to nearly four metres. The other ponds are all stream-fed. A QE11 covenant will contribute to the cost of conventional fencing and stock-proofing.

The Wyeths have so far planted over 1000 native trees, shrubs, grasses and flaxes with some small assistance from members of the Wairarapa Chapter (see DU News). They are concentrating on planting species that grow naturally in the area and do well in the local climate – fast-growing trees to create shelter from the prevailing wind and reduce wave-lap, low shrubs, grass and flaxes on the southern side to retain the view from the house. They have also taken many self-sown natives from the bush at the back of the farm and are hopeful that the soil they moved during construction will contain native seeds that will spring to life. Unfortunately a number



Filling up.



Reflections on a working bee.

of trees died or were damaged during July due to snowfalls and 10 consecutive frosts.

The wetland has already attracted mallard, black swan, dabchick, paradise duck and grey teal. Once the foliage has become more established they hope to release trout and other bird-life, but they have been advised that the fish would compete with the waterfowl for food.

Matthew is currently shooting hares, rabbits and magpies.

This worthwhile development is a credit to the owners and Wetland Care.

2003 Conference Report

The 29th AGM was held in Rotorua over the weekend of 19/20 July. A last minute change, not of DU's making, saw us accommodated at the Heritage Motor Inn on Fenton Street. This worked well with most being able to be on site and others only a short walk away.

Friday evening saw about half the registrants at 'Happy Hour' which stretched out to happy evening as friendships were renewed. Saturday morning 9am the formal AGM was held. The Board reports had previously been circulated. Discussion was had as to the present position of the Waterfowl and Wetlands Trust fund, which has taken a pounding over the last year, along with all such investments. The Trustees are, with some apprehension, hanging in as the markets return to their previous levels. At that point consideration will be given to some less volatile investment, though it is acknowledged the possible returns will not be as great.

Shortly after 10am we were all on our bus, provided by Blueworth Motors of Hamilton, and piloted by our erstwhile chairman Craig Worth. We headed out on the road to Taupo, first stop the McGill wetland which was partly funded by DU. Next to the main road, it is highly visible to passing traffic. Regrettably that very visibility has meant Transit NZ will not permit a sign incorporating reference to DU for fear of traffic problems. The Board will continue to pursue this. The lake created by the McGills is proof of what can be achieved by planning and commitment. It is certainly appreciated by the waterfowl which came and went while we were there.

Then on to Broadlands where Dave Johnston, together with the late Norman Marsh, have created a waterfowl haven on Dave and Anne's farm. The sun shone, the birds flew. It was close to paradise and appreciated by all. Lunch was provided with suitable Banrock Station wines compliments of Banrock Manager Tony Sharley, who accompanied us. The highlight of the visit was the presentation to both Dave Johnston and Jim Campbell of Lifetime Service Awards. Both of these gentlemen have been members since DU's inception, long time Board members though now retired, and have not only talked about wetland restoration but have gone out and done it and continue to do so. Both well deserved awards.

From Broadlands we started back towards Rotorua stopping at the Home of the Duck. This is a wetland development by former Director Mark Newcombe with Fred Bailey, another past Board member, and several others. This development is downstream on the same water system as Dave Johnston's property. Development has been supervised by Dr Grant Dumbell and the results of all the work are certainly paying dividends.

The Auction Dinner on Saturday night was well attended with the room at capacity. Our auctioneer still has jokes no one has heard before and still has the ability to extract maximum dollars. A good time was had by all. Indeed if I had not had such a good time I may have been able to tell you some of the jokes. As they say, you had to be there.

Next year's AGM will be in Palmerston North at approximately the same time of the year. If you missed this year, try to make our 30th AGM a successful celebration.

– David Smith

Ducks Unlimited New Zealand Inc.

29th Annual General Meeting

Held at Heritage Hotel, Fenton Street, Rotorua on 19 July 2003, starting at 9.00am.

Present: N. Candy, C. Worth, S. Rice, D. Smith, W. Abel, R. Cottle and 43 members.

Apologies: Tom & Diana Caithness, Roy & Annette Dench, Brian & Pam Maunsell, Peter and Anne Russell, David Wilks, Alan & Di Wilks, Janet & Ron Denney, Miles Anderson, Neil Hayes.

Confirmation of Minutes: Published in Flight 116, July 2003.

There were no matters arising from the 2002 minutes.

Auditors:

Beattie Rickmans of Hamilton appointed for this year.

2003 Financial, President's, Projects and Lake Waikare Reports: published in Flight.

Waterfowl & Wetland Trust: the

December 2002 figure was \$259,000; now \$273,000.

David Smith advised that the consensus is to run with this investment, despite the loss. The gain over the last six months is equivalent to 18 months' normal interest. When the balance reaches \$300,000 we will evaluate the investment potential, local and offshore. To change now would incur more establishment fees, significantly reducing any interest gained.

Election of Directors:

David Smith, Ossie Latham, Stephen Rice, William Abel, David Wilks, Alan Wilks and Jim Law were re-elected.

Other Business:

Neil Candy presented the Board's decision to draft and implement a Strategic Plan for DU. He asks all members to send ideas to the Board for discussion.

Michael Beddek asked on behalf of Brian and Pam Maunsell, why the conference has to be in the winter. Di Pritt explained that the DU Constitution requires it to be a

minimum of four months following the end of the financial year (March).

Jack Worth asked about DU Decals (available from the DU PO Box address), and where the next AGM will be held (Palmerston North).

Jim Campbell said that some effort needs to be made to encourage young people to join DU. There is an opportunity at the club shoots.

Ray Hayward asked if anyone could provide a marketing report. Neil Candy said that at this stage the answer was no, but the Strategic Plan should provide for it.

Murray Tapp thanked Wetland Care for the donation to the Tapps' wetland project.

There was a discussion on shoveler numbers: Ray Hayward asked if a shoveler programme has been developed. Jim Campbell said he would like to move that shoveler be removed from the target list. Di Pritt said better education to help people identify birds would be worth doing first. David Smith suggested that DU should be involved in promoting this education.



Glenys Hansen asked if DU would ask Fish and Game to do a profile on shoveler numbers, to establish if they are in decline or not. Steve Rice said that at 6.30am and 6.30pm there was too little daylight to try and identify birds and the times could perhaps be changed. Reports from the floor indicated that there are still large numbers of shoveler around. They are highly mobile birds. One way to encourage people's awareness of different breeds is to promote Chris Thomas's forthcoming video when hunters apply for a licence.

John Dermer said people wanted to know how much steel shot to bring in. Neil Candy replied that by 2005, steel shot only was to be used over all water.

The meeting closed at 9.25am.

Wetland Care

Wetland Care has been quite busy. We have assisted financially with four projects and given advice and encouragement to several others. Murray and Lois Tapp are well known members and are in the early stages of creating a magnificent wetland complex on a Northland property with its own kauri stand [see article page 8]. Matthew Wyeth is a farmer near Masterton who seems to have developed an illness that can only be treated with the sound of heavy earthmoving machines, with follow-up treatment involving water, wetland plantings and waterfowl. Jim Campbell has passed on the bug and we have helped Matthew develop a great series of ponds. Wairarapa Chapter members donated and planted wetland species there and held an annual meeting there in August. Looking at the farm we think it will be some years before Matt gets over the sickness and it is important for him to remember that stock really can't survive well without sufficient pasture [see Our People].

Peter Horn in the Manawatu and Warwick Hayes in Masterton have also benefited from Wetland Care funding; Warwick has built another pond in an ongoing series of ponds down a beautiful native bush gully.

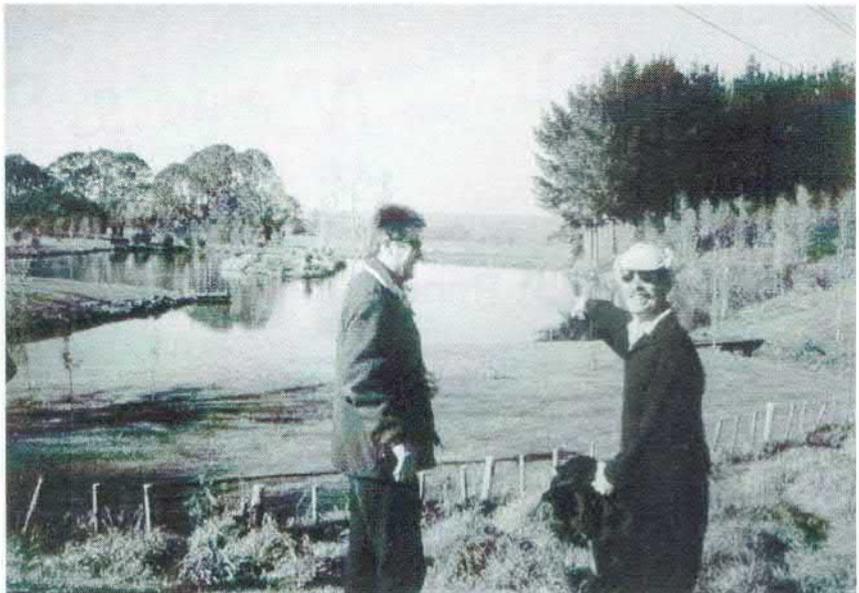
- William Abel, Director

Operation Pateke

BT Recovery Group activities

Public relations plan: Ossie has initiated development of a PR/advocacy plan for the recovery programme via an Auckland Institute of Technology (AUT) student project (PR/journalism majors). Five students are involved as part of their course work and the assignment will run through to mid-November 2003.

Wetland Advice: Ossie and Jim Campbell visited Great Barrier Island in early August,



Conference field trip - Tony Sharley (Banrock Station) and Ross Cottle at Dan McGill's wetland, Reporoa. Photo: William Abel.

in response to a community group's request. They met local farmers to discuss habitat and sympathetic farming practices in the Awana, then went to Port Charles to give advice on practical pateke/wetland habitat protection, management and enhancement as part of a sub-division development adjacent to the Port Charles / Moehau pateke release site.

The Recovery Group met on 17-18 June in Whangarei. Draft minutes and recommendations are being reviewed and final versions will be distributed.

Ray Pearce is continuing to revise the national pateke monitoring guidelines based on issues over the past year and as best practice evolves. The threshold for transmitter attachment is being strengthened by adding a condition index to the weight cut-off, as the weight measure is not robust enough on its own, particularly for juveniles. Ray and Sue are reworking the protocols for post mortem of dead birds, with a decision-tree, to streamline the process for site managers and maximise return for recovery effort.

Sue Moore and Shaun O'Connor met Don Thomas at Massey's Institute of Food, Nutrition and Human Health on 5 August to discuss formulating a conditioning diet for captive-bred pateke prior to release. Sue has determined that gut length in wild birds is longer than in captive birds; this is likely to be linked to more fibre in wild diets. Consequently Don aims to produce a higher fibre diet for trial in captivity and then, if the basics are right, trial it as part of next year's Moehau release. The conditioning period would be about two months pre-release and several months post-release in Nosloc-style feeders, to assist the transition.

During the visit they were joined by Ian McFadden (DOC) and spent a couple of hours with Maurice Alley of Massey, to share some of Ian and Maurice's collective experience at determining predator sign from birds sent for post mortem. About 12 birds (pateke and kaka) were processed and photographed and cause of death estimated. The line between science and art in this very important area is thin and more collaboration will be useful as techniques are refined.

Jason Christensen reports seeing the first four brown teal chicks for the Mana Island season, which hatched on 24 August.

- Ossie Latham

(Contact Ossie if you would like the full Pateke Roundup report-yes, there's more! See Bird Talk, page 12).

26 Odin Place,
Beach Haven
Auckland 10,
email: carpet.court@xtra.co.nz



Pateke roosting in a pohutukawa, O'Shea property, Great Barrier Island. Photo: Ossie Latham.

Operation Royal Swan

So far this season has seen us move five pairs to new owners with more to come. I would like to acknowledge the great assistance this year from Auckland members Mark Shekell and his wife Jeni Moorehead. They have had a very successful breeding season and Mark has been a great help with the transfer of some of the birds around their region.

- William Abel

Operation Gretel

Another 10 teal boxes have been assembled on a six-acre dam near Huntly, where good-sized flocks of grey teal assemble throughout the year. Using 4.2m poles and from a 12ft aluminium boat, the strongmen were able to drive the poles to a given height and with the aid of a spirit level made a good job of the plumb department.

- Jack Worth

DU News

Chapter Reports

Manawatu

The Manawatu Chapter dinner is on 11 October at Rydges Hotel, Palmerston North. Contact Neil Candy, phone 06 376 4448

Wairarapa

More than 20 members enjoyed a successful outing to the Wyeths' new wetland (see Our People) on Sunday 10 August. Everyone was asked to bring a wetland plant, and after the planting session Matthew and Lynley Wyeth provided afternoon tea. An interim annual meeting followed.

Our Chapter dinner and auction will be held at Copthorne Solway Park Masterton on Saturday 18 October starting at 6.30pm. Tickets \$40. Silent auction items needed, please. Contact Chapter Chair Miles Anderson, phone 06 370 3636.

The Sporting Clay Shoot will be held on Sunday 2 November at the Gladstone Pistol Club starting at 9am. There will be 100 targets, entry fee \$55 including lunch. Contact Ross Cottle, phone 06 378 7408.

Waikato

The Waikato Chapter entered a team in the Hamilton Fish and Game Big Three competition in June, and were very surprised to take out four of the six prizes on offer. However, we put up with the pain, and attired in our new vests we posed with our winning pheasant, duck and trout. A big thanks to Fish and Game who organised the event, raised the sponsorship money and served up a splendid barbecue after the presentation.

The 30th Anniversary AGM will be held next July in Palmerston North, and we hope to fill a bus for the trip. Please leave a spot in your diary for this special event. The sleeveless vests advertised in Flight 116 have sold well. We had them made in a



Nest builders LtoR Graeme Singer, Craig Singer, Noel Singer, Brian Johansen and Ray Hayward (Waikato Chapter Chairman). Photo supplied by Noel Singer.

Members in the News



DU President Neil Candy presents Dave Johnston and Jim Campbell with Lifetime Service Awards (see report, page 10).



The Big Three winning team: LtoR Jack Worth, Ray Hayward, Graeme Singer and Malcolm Dench. Photo: Maxine Hayward.

small marketing campaign to help lift our profile in the Waikato. We are offering the vests for sale to DU members, price \$40. They are black polar fleece, lined, with two pockets and the DU logo in gold (see photo).

Contact Noel and Marie Singer, phone 07 839 5644, if you would like to order one (we need a minimum of eight orders).

- Jack Worth and Ray Hayward

A Northland Passion - the Tapp Wetlands



The day before the winter shutdown, 1 May 2003. Kauri Wetland Dam on left, Kahik' on right, planned Oak Wetland beyond.
Photos provided by Lois and Murray Tapp.

'We take every available opportunity to make landowners, surveyors, real estate agents and councils aware of the value of natural wetlands and the potential of reinstated drained wetlands when considering subdivision and land use.'

Murray and Lois Tapp are just a few months into their enormous task of creating something very special. Their present vision and energy, all the mud and machinery and stark beginnings of it, hold the promise of a superb wetland complex for people and wildlife to enjoy far into the future. Read about the beginning of their dream in their own words:

Using our family Trust, we have purchased 44.5ha (110 acres) of ex-dairying land on Taraunui Road, Parua Bay, 23km from Whangarei. The property is basically north-facing with an undulating contour, some steeper sidings and an area of flat land on the Taraunui Stream boundary. It is more or less adjacent to the Whangarei District Council Pataua River Site of Ecological Significance.

We wish to enhance and develop the property's natural environment and in doing so, pursue our many interests in conservation and wildlife. The adjacent Pataua River and salt water marshes will complement our freshwater wetlands. We will live on the property. It is easily accessible, but very quiet and private.

There are 14ha (35ac) of very good native bush and once it is fenced, regeneration of the bush understory should be rapid, as is typical in Northland.

The land was drained many years ago for dairy farming. We intend to create approximately 6ha (15ac) of wetlands, with islands and associated plantings. The catchment area for the wetlands is basically within the property. The remaining land is in clean pasture, which we will continue to graze, apart from a small area that we will replant in native bush.

We are creating three wetlands, which will be landscaped to visually blend them together as much as possible. The two upper wetlands will run parallel to each other but separated by a peninsula, which is mainly grassland with a small area of native bush. Both will have a dam fill about 3m high. The water will be directed from these wetlands into a third, which will then flow into the Taraunui Stream. There will be a height difference of about 2m in the water level between the upper wetlands and the lower one. The fish passes between the levels will permit free movement of native fish to and from the sea.

There are no flooding concerns and no apparent difficulties with the dam sites.

We have named the wetlands as follows:

Kauri Wetland

At the head of this wetland there is a very good podocarp forest remnant of about 14ha. It contains a wide variety of species, with kauri, rimu, totara and puriri predominating. There are small springs in the bush and kokopu can easily be seen in the shallow pools. This wetland is largely open water but there are good shallows and we have made an island at the upper end. The wetland is warm and sheltered and has excellent flightpaths for the birds. The construction of this dam has been completed and more detailed landscaping will be done next summer. A 150mm base pipe and gate valve with a 300mm overflow pipe in a drop box will allow us to manage water levels. There is also a grassed auxiliary overflow (see cover photo). This wetland is now full.

Kahikatea or Kahik' Wetland

At the head of this wetland, there is approximately 2ha of native bush, predominantly kahikatea. The exposed aerial roots of some of these trees could indicate that they became established in water. This wetland is narrower with good shallows, and no islands will be constructed. It is warm and sheltered. The construction of the dam is almost complete, but wet weather forced us to postpone all earthworks until next summer. The drop box system is the same as for the Kauri dam. The base pipe will be left open for the winter.



Getting down to business at the Kauri Dam, 2 April 2003.

Wetlands and Conservation Project

Oak Wetland

The oak tree, currently a focal point, will unfortunately not survive the raised water levels. However, we intend to build an island around it, and it will become a 'natural' perching and nesting site and will remain a feature for some time. The water from the other two wetlands flows into this wide flat area and then into Taraunui Stream. The dam wall will be formed inside an existing low stopbank, which will remain untouched. Several islands will be made, linked by channels and open water. A 150mm base pipe and gate valve will enable the water levels to be lowered as necessary. The concrete overflow will also become a fish pass. Small pools will be formed using rocks set in the concrete. This will be the last wetland to be constructed and will be completed next summer.

Frog Pond.

It was necessary to build a stock crossing at the head of the Kauri wetland, and in doing so we have formed another small but very effective pond. The water flows through watercress and is clean and clear. As yet there are no frogs, but the ducks love it! A favourite spot.

Following discussions with Robert Webb from the Whangarei Bird



The area which will form the Oak Wetland, 4 March 2003.

Recovery Centre, we hope that we will be able to provide a 'soft release' environment for injured native birds.

We believe that conservation and sensible development can complement one another and that the importance of wetlands to our environment is frequently overlooked when subdividing land. This property is no exception. It was only after much discussion with the owner, surveyor and real estate agent that we were able to make the necessary adjustments to the original subdivision plan prior to purchase.

We have been particularly fortunate in that the vendors have taken a genuine interest in the project. As a condition of purchase, we asked that stock be kept out of the bush prior to takeover date, so



that the current season's native seedlings could be saved. With their co-operation we are effectively one year ahead of schedule. This winter we will concentrate on weed control, fencing and tree planting. For some time, Murray has been collecting seeds and growing native plants and trees for the wetlands and bush. Our eldest son, Stephen, has been most accommodating, allowing Murray to turn his back yard into a mini nursery. Approximately 2.5km of fencing is needed to fence the bush and selected areas of the wetlands.

The bush areas will be enhanced with native trees only. The wetland areas will be planted with a mixture of native and exotic trees to provide food and shelter for wildlife and to add landscape interest. Over 1200 trees and shrubs have already been planted. We will link up walkways around the wetlands and through the bush, using old farm access tracks wherever possible.

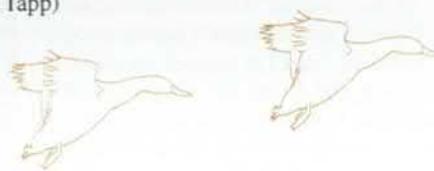
We hope, in time, to make this project available for educational purposes and it has already created considerable interest. We take every available opportunity to make landowners, surveyors, real estate agents and councils aware of the value of natural wetlands and the potential of reinstated drained wetlands when considering subdivision and land use.

There is much work yet to be done but it is very satisfying to observe the wildlife activity at this early stage. We are excited by the conservation potential of the property and as the project develops and matures, we hope others will also be able to enjoy it.

We have observed the following bird species so far – good and bad! Magpie, wild peafowl and hawk; Californian and brown quail, pheasant, native pigeon, fantail, grey warbler, tui, rosella, finch, swallow, kingfisher and spur-wing plover; white-faced heron, black shag, little shag, pied stilt, pukeko, bittern, dabchick, paradise, grey and mallard ducks and brown teal.

We wish to thank DU/Wetland Care for the financial support and encouragement we have received. It is very much appreciated and we look forward to your visits as the project evolves.

- Murray and Lois Tapp
(Photos by Lois Tapp)



Left & above: Before – the Kahik' Wetland area in early March, and later – in May 2003.

Letters to the Editor

AGM impressions

Bets and I were made so welcome at our first DU AGM. Naturally you are a bit apprehensive for the first one. Will we know anyone? What sort of folk attend these 'do's'? Will we feel out of the frame? No Way. Right from the first evening we were made most welcome. Folk would come up and ask where we were from, and were really interested. Members shared their wetland experiences, and offered advice for our rather tentative efforts. The entire experience was great - a big Thankyou to Neil Candy and his friendly team. Looking forward to the next one.

Bets and Tony Simpson (Marton)

Mallard alert

Duck numbers are determined by a number of factors, but one element that I feel is neglected at present is the duck itself, and I refer to the mighty mallard. In the 1950s in the Waikato, many reared a clutch under hens. They reached maturity, took to the sky, saluted the hen-house and disappeared. These ducks reared and defended an average 6-8 young each and within a few years dominated the duck population - we now have a mighty game bird. However, I worry we now have a duck that is losing its wild instinct - feed your pond and they cue up in numbers.

Healthy birds reproduce well and mallards are no exception. How many ducks had eggs in them when you dressed them this year? The first hatch in May-June; dogs and weather attend to these. The next hatch August-September, but the difference today, compared with the past, is in the size of the clutches. Double figures are common but the hens don't appear to be able to defend them. The numbers are slowly dwindling and often the whole clutch disappears. Fortunately, the productive mallards try again. They are laying too many eggs and produce nothing - study the empty nests. We must always have had predators - ferrets are the villains at present - but I remember when we had hens and the ferrets would periodically clean out the hen-house, we still had plenty of ducks in spite of this. Could some of DU's resources be directed to studying the mallards to ensure they remain truly wild birds before they become thoroughly domesticated - maybe we need some hybrid vigour back in the breed?

- Richard Carey (Matamata)

Notices

Alan Perano would dearly love a black swan pen for his cob Sky. If you can help, please write to Alan at Box 333, Picton, or phone 03 579 9900, mobile 025 372 640.

Lifetime Service Awards Presented

During the wetland tour at the 2003 Conference, Jim Campbell and Dave Johnston were each told the other was getting an award and were asked to speak on each other's behalf. This is what Neil Candy said at the presentation:

Dave Johnston joined DU in 1983 not long after Norman Marsh took him to a Board meeting at Tokaanu. He obviously liked what he saw and heard, soon becoming a Life Member, later a Director for many years.

He became and still is a dedicated and energetic breeder of pateke, whio and royal swan. While serving as a Board member he was breed co-ordinator for royal swan and travelled to the South Island many times at his own expense to capture and transport these birds north - all the while leaving Anne at home to milk the cows. Anne, we salute you! Avid DU supporters Dave, Anne and the late Norman Marsh founded the Broadlands Wildfowl Trust, and one of their greatest contributions to New Zealand wetlands is right behind you.

We try to hold a Board meeting here once a year, in late May usually, but the view can be very distracting.

Ladies and gentlemen, it gives me great pleasure to present to Dave Johnston this Lifetime Service Award.

Jim Campbell joined DU in 1976 and has dedicated much of his life ever since then to waterfowl and wetlands. He has served as a Director for many years and was President for an incredible seven years - truly a tiger for punishment!

A member of the National Wildlife Trust, he is also a Trustee of the Waterfowl and Wetlands Trust since its inception 12 years ago. He has spent countless hours advising and creating (on his trusty bulldozer) wetlands around the Wairarapa and once spent two weeks constructing a wetland on Mana Island.

Like Dave he also is a renowned breeder of pateke, whio and royal swan.

Jim and Raana's love of wetlands is displayed all over the family farm and they have a fabulous secluded hideaway overlooking the largest lake. Last year the family's endeavours were recognised when they won the Ballance Supreme Farm Environment Award, the Best Sheep and Beef Farm and also the Habitat Improvement Award, for the Wellington region - a tremendous and popular result. It also gives me great pleasure to present this Lifetime Service Award to Jim Campbell

Bill and Jan Clinton-Baker are moving to Masterton early in the New Year - 'The Sanctuary' will be offered for sale at the end of November. If all goes well there could be some more young Australian shelducks available at the end of this year - anyone interested should contact Bill at The Sanctuary, Te Kopi Road, Masterton, phone 06 372 7801.

email billcb@xtra.co.nz

There will be an article bringing everyone up to date with the shelduck situation in Flight's January issue.

DU member Viola Palmer has written seeking advice on dressing, preparing and cooking wild duck. If you can help, post your suggestions to her at Box 285,

Waikanae, or send an email to viola-phil.palmer@xtra.co.nz



DU extends a warm welcome to new members:

June- August 2003

Canterbury: Oscar Newton

Wairarapa: Rex MacPhail, Robyn Studholme, Jeff Griffith, John Poole

Hawkes Bay: Dudley Galbraith

Bay of Plenty: Graeme Fairey, Roger Lorigan

Waikato: Hamilton Fish and Game, Graeme Singer, Juliette Chamberlain and David Wallace, David Vincent

Auckland: Ivan and Branlea Simunovich

It Happened Like this ...

Beginner's Luck, Opening Weekend 2003.

As always, debate on where to shoot opening weekend rages months before the season starts. This year we decided Kawhia harbour was the spot and we would spread out around the harbour and inlets. The weather looked as though it would play its part.

My 10-year-old son Matt had come shooting for the past two or three seasons, but had never been out for opening weekend. This year I decided to invite him to two luxurious days of shooting on the harbour and sleeping in a 14ft tinny on a piece of ply that would double as our table.

Matt had previously shot a borrowed 410, however this year I purchased a youth 410 in the hope he would bag a duck.

Thursday night we packed the boat and ute. The dog hopped in the back of the ute and lay down as if to say 'you're not leaving me behind'. Matt and his mum went shopping for our food supplies, and returned with tinned everything, no chance of going hungry.

Friday morning and the weather looked good, no time to muck around. A last check through our list of equipment, decoys, guns, food, ammo, callers and the dog (still in the ute) and we're off. Arrived at the Kawhia camp where Jack, Malcolm and his son Phillip had been setting up the campfire. High tide was an hour and a half away and we had to get across the harbour from the Te Kauri stream to the Rakaunui Inlet and set up before we ran out of water. Those who have been on Kawhia harbour when the tide is running out will know why we wanted to get across the shallow water quickly. The sky was looking a bit dark and half way across, sure enough down it came. Murphy's Law, when the wet weather gear is packed at the bottom of everything.

There were a number of duck in the inlet, mainly mallard and paradise – it looked positive. We chose a spot we had previously seen to park the boat, with a reasonable view of the bay. The added advantage was that it was under a very large old tea-tree. We covered the boat with the covers and camo net, and as the tide dropped we drove tea-tree branches into the mud so the boat could go up and down with the tide and still be hidden. All looked pretty good.

We had arranged for someone from the camp to pick us up to go back for dinner and a few tales of seasons gone by. We didn't quite know where the road was except that it crossed the top of the inlet we were camped on, so we placed markers on fences to track our way back in the dark. The bonfire was raging at camp and we enjoyed a meal and a few drinks, with great anticipation as there always is the night before opening. We were dropped back at the bridge as the rain stopped, and trekked back to the boat. The lab (BJ) thought it was pretty good sleeping between two warm bodies in the bottom of the tinny. Didn't need the alarm in the morning with Matt and I both well awake before dawn. During the night, with the tide right out the boat sat unevenly in the mud and it had meant quite an angle to sleep on. BJ took his chance and was sound asleep on Matt's sleeping bag and blanket.

Dawn broke with mallards calling all around us. A pair dropped in and I was pleased to bag an early double. This is looking good, ducks going all directions following those shots. Oops sorry, ducks going but no ducks coming - by late morning we were still on the one pair.

Matt had his first lesson in patience out shooting — second lesson followed soon after with plenty of calling. Then while it was very quiet we decided on a bit of target practice. Soon a parry dropped by and Matt shot his first duck with the 410. I was surprised as it dropped dead with one shot. It was several hours before a couple of mallards came in, this time however they both escaped unharmed, my good record for the morning shattered.

Matt was again lucky when another parry came too close but this one wasn't a straight kill and the dog had to do his job as it came to hide in the undergrowth on the shore.

We relaxed in the boat all afternoon, snacking on the many supplies Matt had picked and chatting about the anticipated influx of ducks at dusk.

Oops sorry, no influx of ducks at dusk. So it was clean up the boat time, prepare dinner and sit back for a couple of drinks. A quick catch up by cell phone with Jack and Malcolm, unfortunately neither had fared much better. Sunday will be better, I'm sure.

Up before dawn again Sunday, full of anticipation and looking to put Saturday's poor day behind us. This morning's a lot colder than yesterday and it looks as though we have had a small frost on the hills. The ply bed seemed a little harder last night and getting to sleep was not as easy. I was glad we weren't staying for three nights but Matt was happy enough.

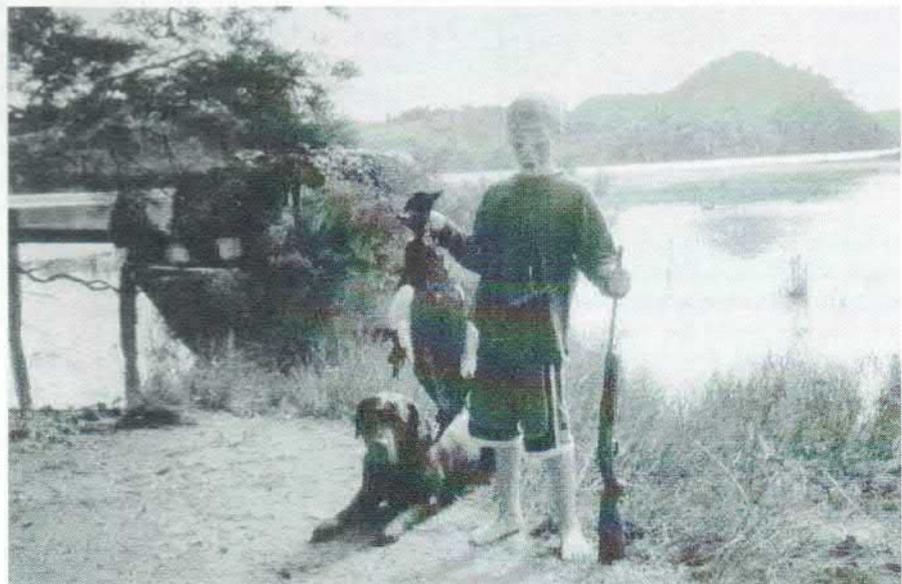
There wasn't much of a dawn flight at all this morning, we did a lot of calling, a lot of looking at the horizon but absolutely no shooting. To fill in the time Matt went for a walk up the top of the inlet to flush out the few parries that dived in over the hills.

We started packing the boat gear away early, ready for the 11am tide, however we were lucky and managed to shove our way off the mud 45 minutes early. We picked up the decoys and headed back out to the harbour. There wasn't a breath of wind and the harbour was like glass, a magnificent sight. We spotted a mob of Canadian geese sitting on the harbour, an unusual sight. On the way back I took Matt past the rock where all the Royal spoonbills rest and wait for the tide to recede, there were a good 30 birds there as usual.

We pulled up at the maimai where Jack was shooting and he was packing up as well, so we headed back to camp. Opening weekend was a dud for the shooters but a great adventure for Matt. When I asked him what he enjoyed most about the weekend he replied, the bonfire, chicken and chips around the fire Friday night, thatching the boat when we first arrived up the Rakaunui, shooting his first duck, and sleeping out in the boat with the dog.

That all sounds like the fun of duck shooting to me.

- Ray Hayward.



Bird Talk

Birdlife of the Lower Waitaki – prospects and Project Aqua

Summary of a talk by Dr Ken Hughey

The native birdlife of New Zealand's braided rivers, concentrated mostly in Canterbury and parts of North Otago and Marlborough, is exceptional. Amongst the range of wading birds, gulls and terns, are four species of rare ecological interest and conservation concern, all of which occur on the lower Waitaki River. Best known of these species is the critically endangered black stilt which now breeds in the wild only in the upper Waitaki catchment but which has recently been recorded on a few occasions feeding on the lower Waitaki. The wrybill plover, the only bird in the world with a laterally recurved bill (it twists to the right), is especially adapted to feeding and nesting on these rivers. It is a threatened species in decline with only about a dozen or so breeding on the lower Waitaki. Perhaps most noticeable and notable of the four species is the black-fronted tern, a species in serious population decline with perhaps 10% of the total population breeding on the Lower Waitaki. The last of the four is the black-billed gull, which though still present in large numbers is also thought to be in serious decline.

These bird species are in decline for several reasons. Their preferred riverbed habitat is large areas of bare shingle to nest on and multiple river channels for feeding in and over. These habitats have been grossly impacted by water abstraction for irrigation, dams for hydro electricity and the invasion of exotic vegetation including lupins, willow and gorse. This vegetation and the controlled and lowered river flows have combined to make life on these riverbeds attractive to mammalian predators including ferrets, stoats, cats and hedgehogs. These animals, in combination with the reductions in preferred habitat, are now largely responsible for the ongoing population declines of these species. Another risk faced by black-fronted terns in particular is that caused by disturbance, largely by humans. On a large river, like the Waitaki, disturbance is kept to a minimum because access to many islands can only be contemplated by boat. On smaller rivers, which the Waitaki will become, people can walk or drive on to these islands.

The results of recent research indicates the importance of the larger braided rivers in helping to conserve some of these important threatened bird species. Even the lower Waitaki, with its heavily managed flow regime, provides at least nesting habitat

security for the black-fronted tern in particular. It is the habitat attributes required for this species that Meridian Energy's consultants have identified as important in planning the Project Aqua development. Because two thirds of the river's flow will be lost as a result of the scheme, the protection of breeding areas from predators will also be lost. The consultants have recommended that Meridian undertake predator control programmes, use herbicides and machinery to provide bare islands for nesting on, and control access by anglers, stock and others during critical nesting times.

Will Meridian's mitigation plans work? At face value they seem comprehensive – but they need to be, given that 10% of the black-fronted tern population, thought to be in rapid decline in many places, occurs on the lower Waitaki. But, there are concerns. Meridian plans habitat mitigation in terms of birdlife in only limited areas of the river – will this be enough? What if these areas are also areas that are good for fishing and it proves impossible to control disturbance problems – after all, the river is a public asset with public rights of access. Will the birdlife then move to other areas – maybe, but only if those areas have suitable habitat. These concerns and others should be addressed before managers of the birdlife can be convinced that turning a large river into a small river will not harm key bird species.

Contact: Ken Hughey, Environment, Society and Design Division, PO Box 84, Lincoln University.

(With thanks to Dr June Slee of Waitaki First and Dr Ken Hughey)



Black-fronted tern

Pateke Roundup, 15 August 2003

News from the Recovery Group and others associated with pateke recovery work.

Captive Breeding

Eight birds from late last season were too young for the June Moehau release. Two breeders have pairs sitting on nests with others getting close to sitting. Flock mating of progeny from the last intake of Gt. Barrier wild birds and high value captive progeny is going well, and the new pairs should be ready for moving shortly. The draft husbandry manual is with Helen Gummer for final input and the quarantine protocols have been revised in line with a recent meeting between Kevin, Shaun, Richard Jakob-Hoff and Andrew Nelson at Auckland Zoo. Both will go to the breeders for comment. The breeder's database (linked to brown teal website) is operational and we are encouraging breeders and release sites to use it.

- Kevin Evans (captive co-ordinator)

BT Conservation Trust

We have four juvenile brown teal, just about fully-flighted. Have just moved them, with parents, into the best aviary and will move them to the new holding aviary, minus parents, as soon as it is finished. We've just concreted a 12m x 5m pond in the new aviary. The breeding pair did very well considering the horrendous frosts we've had, on top of the worst storm in the Wairarapa for 40 years! Sadly we did lose one adult female from another pair during the winter. 'Down on the farm' we've eliminated three massive cats during the past three months, plus five rats, three hedgehogs, but no mustelids.

- Neil Hayes

Stoat bait trials

Most exciting news I have is only peripheral to teal but an important step forward. The Stoat Technical Advisor Group (STAG) has agreed to fund two bait trials. One at Mimiwhangata testing fresh bunny against egg, and the other at Whananaki testing last year's winner, freeze-dried rabbit, also against eggs. STAG wants it to run for two years to ensure robust statistics. This will effectively increase our knowledge from the last trial. I'd add potential to make life easier for all those Landcare Groups as a key reason for support!

- Nigel Miller (DOC Whangarei)

Pateke Roundup supplied by Ossie Latham.

A Scot Takes the Clay Road

Nest predation is one of the most important factors affecting nest success in birds. In New Zealand where introduced predators are decimating the native bird populations, the need for more research into factors influencing predation of nests is urgently required. The aim of my research is to devise a more specific and sensitive method of measuring the predation pressure on nests, in order to develop a system that can be applied as a monitoring technique to measure this on nests in bush remnants. For this study I am testing the effect of using artificial nests and eggs. The success of these will be compared with the success of natural nests of the North Island robin.

I have chosen nine North Island reserves: Karori (Wellington), Bushy Park (Wanganui), Paengaroa (Taihape), Boundary Stream (Hawkes Bay), Waipapa and Waimoana (Pureora Forest), Waotu (Waikato), Wenderholm (Auckland) and Tiritiri Matangi Island. At each site I have placed 30 artificial nests with two eggs per nest. The nests are hand-made using leaf litter bound into a nest

shape with netting and string. The eggs are made of clay, which remains soft. When a nest is attacked the predators leave marks in the soft clay which allows me to identify them. The nests were run during the robins' breeding season (late August-early September) and checked regularly.

Now that the season is coming to a close it is time to look at the eggs – all 1200 of them! From first impressions I think the main culprits are ship rats but I suspect that further analysis might tell me more. I am confident that I will see some interesting results. I would like to thank all those who supported me during my time on Tiri, not just with funding from Tiri supporters but with kind words of encouragement.

– **Becky Lewis, in Dawn Chorus, Winter 2003.**

University of Glasgow Zoology Honours graduate Rebecca Lewis came to survey robins on Tiritiri Matangi island last year, and is now working on her nest predation study for a Massey University M.Sc thesis.

Flight Ecofile

Grants Help to Protect Wetlands

A new Hawkes Bay Regional Council scheme is proving very popular: For the past six years, Hawkes Bay Regional Council has focused on the top 10 wetlands in the region. But this year, the Council has decided to introduce a programme encouraging farmers to look after wetlands on their properties.

Land management manager Garth Eyles said these wetlands are important to the farmer even if they won't be of national or even regional significance. 'Councillors think it's a great idea because it increases biodiversity and improves water quality. We don't have a distinct description in this case,' he said. 'Simply any area where plants are growing in a wet place; basically swampy areas that a farmer would traditionally have drained, but now the move is towards enhancement as people perceive different values.'

The council has put \$50,000 towards the programme, with a maximum annual grant of \$5000 per farm. There are no covenants or other similar requirements, and council staff will visit and provide advice and some planting. 'We haven't done any promotion...but there have already been 50 expressions of interest,' Mr Eyles said. 'That shows the huge interest out there, but it also means we're going to have to go through a selection process.'

Land management staff will be given specific wetland training, and with no time limit on the programme, funding is likely to continue in future years. 'It fits in with Council's programme of assisting the QEII

Don't Just Blame The Cows

Methane is also known as marsh gas, the simplest hydrocarbon, found wherever the decomposition of vegetable matter is taking place under water. For nearly 30 years DU and now Wetland Care have been encouraging landowners to convert harmful swamps, bogs and marshes into productive open wetlands, thus creating vital habitat for a wide range of birdlife and when fenced and planted the trees will also absorb carbon monoxide.

Should the Government consider a bog or 'Fen' tax too? What about a 'Fill' tax? Should the politicians heed the example of Waste Management Ltd in Auckland, and put some of that surplus and 'energy' into incentives for biogas power generation from all our landfills? And don't forget Forest tax credits...

(We hope to include more about swamps in future issues – Ed.)

Trust to protect native bush on farms, and riparian protection in priority waterways,' Mr Eyles said. The riparian programme is being reviewed with the aim of including biodiversity values. Mr Eyles said the whole-farm approach will help Hawkes Bay farmers to develop more environmentally sustainable properties, which they are already doing very well.

Source: *The Dominion Post*, 28 August 2003.

Water Harvesting in New Zealand...

It is still International Year of Freshwater. The complex issues surrounding Project Aqua seem pertinent to wetland carers.

Meridian Energy's proposed billion-dollar power scheme using water from the Waitaki River received a major boost in early September, when the Environment Minister announced the introduction of special legislation to combine all Resource Consent applications for use of the river's water. The move should significantly speed up the application process.

A number of major developments are seeking Resource Consent for projects in the Waitaki River catchment area. Project Aqua falls across the boundaries of four local authorities (Waitaki District Council, Waimate District Council, Otago Regional Council and Environment Canterbury), which have different responsibilities under the Resource Management Act. Meridian Energy is required to apply to each of them for the necessary permission.

The Minister will put all the applications on hold through ministerial call-in powers, and will introduce legislation to speed the application process. A statutory body will be established to develop a water allocation framework for the area and to hear public submissions. A panel of commissioners will make the final decision.

Source: *media release*, 3 September 2003.



Hydro Development – the Easy or Only Answer?

Fish and Game NZ Comments:

Power shortages are creating pressure for more and more hydro development. Fish and Game NZ believes it is totally misleading to present hydro as a sustainable energy option when the nation's stock of rivers from which such energy is generated is finite. If further dams are planned, the focus should be on rivers that have already been dammed and where the fishery is already severely degraded, or rivers with no value as fisheries. We believe, from a Fish and Game perspective, it is better to have a few large scale projects than a multiplicity of smaller hydro projects targeting rivers with high in-stream values.

Ultimately the public has to accept that there is an urgent need to be more energy efficient, and look for sources for energy other than hydro if New Zealand is to retain its remaining wild and scenic free-flowing rivers. Fish and Game will endeavour to highlight the point that it is far better to implement alternatives now than wait for all the rivers to be dammed and then flounder around for alternatives.

AND

Action Plan Concerns Fish and Game

'Sustainable development' is becoming another buzz phrase, with layers of government officials beavering away on an 'Action Plan' for New Zealand. However, the big worry for Fish and Game is that water is being targeted as the primary natural resource to feed the 'development' being contemplated. While water is a renewable resource, the places where it exists are not. Rivers are finite. Therefore, the whole idea of 'sustainable development', when based on a finite resource base, is a contradiction in terms.

Fish and Game NZ, therefore, has much to fear from the proposed Action Plan, which is showing every indication of leading to a further loss of fisheries habitat. Indeed we are already hearing that some key ministers and their officials would like to see Water Conservation Orders done away with, something that Fish and Game would resist most vigorously.

(These passages quoted from www.fishandgame.org.nz)

Quoting...

To talk about progress is not to make a value judgement. Progress is merely a movement towards ... something. It is not automatically a Good Thing. Cancer can be progressive. Rust and decay, bad luck or telling lies can progress. You could make progress, in the dark, towards a very high cliff.

Waitaki First seeks your Support...

The Waitaki River is one of the great broad braided rivers of the South Island of New Zealand and one of few in the world. It drains a significant part of the Southern Alps including the Mount Cook region.

Under Project Aqua, the lower Waitaki River will have its flow reduced by two thirds; this water will be diverted through six power stations linked by an 80m wide, 60km canal on the south bank of the river. The canal will remove approximately 1000ha of agricultural and potential viticultural land from production and severely disrupt communities along the valley.

Meridian Energy, the proponents of Project Aqua, call it a 'low impact' power scheme... nothing could be further from the truth.

Waitaki First Inc. was established to oppose Project Aqua and thereby protect the lower reaches of the Waitaki River. Waitaki First encourages people to consider the exceedingly high environmental, economic, social and other costs of Project Aqua.

Our Objectives:

- To preserve and protect, for the benefit of future generations of all New Zealanders, the ecology, sustainable use, amenity and cultural values of the lower reach of the Waitaki River and valley by opposing Project Aqua.
- To network and liaise with groups and individuals to share information, avoid duplication of research and resources and to ensure that as many people as possible have an opportunity to consider the environmental, economic, social and cultural effects of Project Aqua.
- To better inform people of the issues and impacts of Project Aqua by arranging for various experts to speak at public forums, and by encouraging debate.
- To secure funding to enhance public understanding of the Resource Management Act, the Resource Consent process and how to prepare a submission for a Resource Consent Hearing.
- To support environmentally sustainable irrigation which is locally controlled and managed independent of Project Aqua.

From Waitaki First's new website www.waitakifirst.co.nz which is still being developed – here you can find contacts for those involved and links to more information. Or email Secretary Dr June Slee: jfslee@xtra.co.nz

Boise Cascade Sees the Light

On 3 September, Boise Cascade, the number one logger on US public lands in the 1990s, released a landmark policy agreeing to halt its logging of endangered and old growth forests in the US and abroad. It also committed itself to responsible forest management practices, including a decision to give preference to wood harvested from certified 'sustainably managed' forests.

Boise Cascade's decision marks an enormous shift in corporate environmental policy — especially in the logging industry — and sets a precedent for all industries. It also signals the immense power that dedicated grassroots and advocacy organisations can have in effecting positive change by using creative and strategic organising tactics.

(You can read this story in full at www.alternet.org/story.html?StoryID=16706)

Kiwi Kids — Conservationists Now and Tomorrow.

Forest and Bird's Kiwi Conservation Club began in 1988. It is a national club for children that fosters the appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of nature through fun conservation-based activities. More than 17,000 KCC magazines go out to children, families, groups and schools around New Zealand, providing stories, experiments, puzzles and competitions. Local KCC groups organise field trips, camps and activities, and KCC has an award-winning and popular website (www.kcc.org.nz). A few subscriptions – single \$12, family \$20 (includes one magazine per child per issue) – could be ticks on your Christmas present list.

For more information visit the KCC site or Forest and Bird at www.forestandbird.org.nz

3rd International Wildlife Management Congress

1-5 December 2003, University of Canterbury, Christchurch NZ. This important congress incorporates the 16th Australasian Wildlife Management Conference and is being held in New Zealand for the first time. The inaugural congress was held in Costa Rica (1993), the second in Hungary (1999). Contact:

3rd IWMC, The Conference Office, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch, phone 03 364 2915, fax 03 364 2324, email wildlife@cont.canterbury.ac.nz

Time

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. The newly designed nozzles feed both wheat and barley, or you can feed whole maize by using the special end cap provided. 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 \$26.25 each (please advise spiral or parallel) and brackets \$26.95 each.

FENN TRAP MK 6

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

\$35.00 each.

THE THUMPER

A lightweight tunnel trap designed to kill rats and stoats. The tunnel incorporates the spring mechanism on the same principle as the Timms trap. Available as single with a closed end or double, which is a run-through with two traps. The traps are set from the outside by pulling a cord. Easy and safe to use.

Single \$35, double \$49.

The Mitredale Duck Club Cookbook

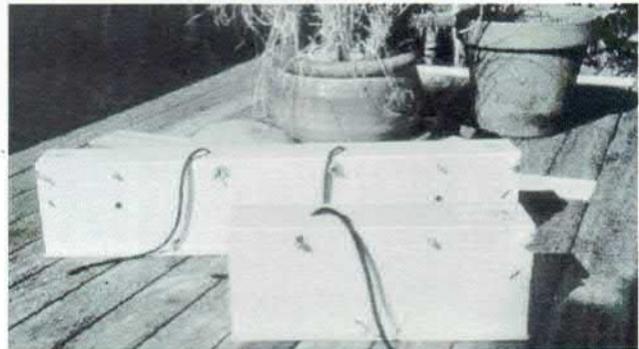
By Di Pritt, published by Halcyon Press. \$19.95 including GST, postage and packing.

'Established' is a good word, much used in garden books, 'The plant, when established' ...
Oh, become established quickly, quickly, garden!
For I am fugitive, very fugitive –

Those that come after me will gather these roses,
And watch, as I do now, the white wisteria
Burst, in the sunshine, from its pale green sheath.

Planned. Planted. Established. Then neglected,
Till at last the loiterer by the gate will wonder
At the old, old cottage, the old wooden cottage,
And say, 'One might build here, the view is glorious;
This must have been a pretty garden once.

By Mary Ursula Bethell (1874-1945)



Change of Address Are you moving? Please send us your new details.



Name.....
Old address..... New address.....
Phone..... Email.....

For membership and general inquiries, Ducks Unlimited, PO Box 9795, Newmarket, Auckland, or email: info@ducks.org.nz

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



DUCKS UNLIMITED NEW ZEALAND INC.
For Wetlands and Waterfowl.

Title..... First Name..... Surname.....
Address.....
Phone..... Fax.....
E-mail.....

All subscriptions include GST. Membership is available in eight 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.



WINCHESTER®

MORE THAN A NAME. A LEGEND.



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



*Matuku Wetland evaluation. November, 2002.
L to R Shaun O'Connor; DOC (Brown Teal Recovery Group leader), John Staniland (Waitakere Forest and Bird),
Alison Davis (DOC consultant, Waitakere Forest and Bird member). Photo: Ossie Latham.*

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