

Flight



ISSUE 136 - July 2008



Pateke return to Cape Kidnappers

Conference notes

Banrock Roadshow visits

Taumata Lagoon Hearing

and more inside



wetland care NEW ZEALAND

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Website : www.ducks.org.nz

A BIG Thank you from Sandra!

To those who have paid their subscription so promptly, who responded with their new postal code and other details as requested I really appreciate it.

To all those you have registered for conference, it is shaping up to be a fantastic weekend and I thank you for getting your registration in earlier than in the past.

To those still thinking about attending conference, you will not be disappointed as it is always a fantastic weekend; please contact me directly by email if possible with all your details and we can get your registration in immediately.

Reminder - if you are unable to attend conference and wish to register your apology either email me at info@ducks.org.nz, phone 0274 803 422 or mail it to the box address.

See you at conference.

Sandra Pipes
DUNZ Administration
P.O. Box 9795
Newmarket



Make sure you register NOW for this exhilarating weekend

Ducks Unlimited New Zealand
34th Annual Conference
25-27 July 2008

Venue and Accommodation
Anchorage Motor Lodge, 26 West Quay, Napier.
Opposite Conference Venue

Programme

Friday 25 July

7pm Registration and pre-dinner drinks in the Quayside conference room.
\$35 set menu dinner available.

Saturday 26 July

9am AGM and morning tea.
10.30am Visit to Cape Kidnappers Wildlife Reserve.
Drinks and lunch to follow.
6.30pm Drinks in the conference room. Silent Auction begins.
7.00pm Award presentations.
7.30pm Dinner and Main Auction.

Sunday 27 July

9.30am Social gathering, speaker: Barbara Hambridge of DU Canada. Morning tea.

Insight

Water is getting scarce.

The recent drought has really brought into focus what an essential resource water is.

The importance of it to industry, domestic, farming and of course wetlands and the environment is highlighted when it is in short supply.

A recent case in the Wairarapa in which a consent to take ground water for irrigation purposes was refused because of the effect it was having on a nearby wetland is possibly a sign of things to come in the future.

The fact is that water is a vital resource and a finite commodity and great care must be given to it so that it is not wasted or degraded.

The drought of 07-08 is over and it is easy to forget how bad it was but we need to take care in the future that the amount of water taken is kept in balance with all sections of the environment.

Ross Cottle

President



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Our Mission

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

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

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Front cover

At Cape Kidnappers in May pateke are re-introduced. See story and photos on pages 8 & 9.

Inset: "Off you go!"

Rai Banbury of Constellation New Zealand (formerly Nobilo Wines) at Cape Kidnappers releases a pateke.



**Ducks Unlimited New Zealand
33rd Annual General Meeting
28 / 29 July 2007
9am at Sun Court Hotel, Taupo.**

Welcome: The President, Ross Cottle, welcomed members to the 33rd Annual General Meeting.

Mr Cottle asked the meeting to note and remember Jack Worth who has past away since the last AGM, a Founding Father and involved in the organisation for a very long time.

Apologies:

Neil & Julie Candy, Alice & Ross Hood, Euan Bidwill, Nicola Morris, Beverly McConnell, Gary Croad, Janet Denny, Margaret & Michael Beddek, Geoff & Gail Reid, Anthony Griffin, Peter Russell, Lady Isaac, Ann Richardson, Trevor Thomson,

Motion: The apologies tendered are accepted.

Moved: John Bishop; Seconded: Ian Jensen; Carried

Minutes of the last AGM: circulated in the 33rd AGM and Conference Pack and #132 Flight magazine.

Motion: That the minutes of the last AGM be accepted as a true and complete record.

Moved: John Dermer; Seconded: Di Pritt; Carried.

Matters arising from the 2006 minutes: There were no matters arising.

President's Report as circulated in the 33rd AGM & Conference pack and #132 Flight magazine.

Motion: The President's report is accepted.

Moved: Di Pritt; Seconded: Ken Barnes; Carried.

Matters arising from the President's 2007 Report: There were no matters arising.

Financial Report:

Presented at the meeting (copy attached).

Motion: That the 2007 financial report be accepted.

Moved: David Smith; Seconded: Nancy Payne; Carried.

Matters Arising from the Financial Report:

Details of the accounts are to be made more identifiable for accurate reporting. The change in auditors had resulted in the accounting systems also changing.

A vote of thanks was proposed by the President to John Bishop for the job that he had accomplished this financial year.

Moved: John Dermer; Seconded: Di Pritt; Carried.

Appointment of Auditors:

Motion: That PriceWaterhouseCoopers be appointed as Auditors for 2007/2008

Moved: John Bishop; Seconded: Glenys Hansen; Carried.

Waterfowl and Wetlands Trust Report:

David Smith reported that the balance as at December 2005 was \$401,595.00. December 2006 was \$461,046.00.

As at the end of July 2007 the balance is \$469,977.35.

There has been no call on the funds over the last year.

Due to the dollar fluctuations the trust is in a good position. Within the trust criteria, there may be some funds paid out in the coming year. The trust is doing what it was set up for, with the donations and interest. Last quarter the trust received \$700 plus dollars. It is in a very good state.

Election of Officers:

Board Election:

The President read out the following Statement:

The Constitution states that the Board should consist of not less than

six, of which half, but not more than two thirds shall be permanently appointed Directors.

As of right, the permanent appointments are the Chairman, President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.

Other permanent appointments are David Smith and William Abel
Retiring Directors were Rachael Mitchell, John Dermer, Jim Law, Graham Gurr.

Standing down were Graham Gurr and Rachael Mitchell.

Graham Gurr was thanked for more than 20 years work on the Board of Ducks Unlimited.

Standing for re-election to the Board; John Dermer and Jim Law.

Nominations for the Board:

No further nominations for the Board were forthcoming.

Jim Law advised that there needs to be more diversification (age and gender). He suggested that members try and encourage younger members of their families to get involved.

Motion: That John Dermer and John Law be confirmed as Board members.

Moved: John Bishop; Seconded: Jim Campbell; Carried.

Reports:

Membership:

Sandra Pipes reported that membership is static, but payment of subscriptions this year has been better than previously for this time of year. Current paid members 493 with 40 still outstanding, giving a total membership of 533. Our website has made a huge difference in quantity of people enquiring about DUNZ and possible membership.

Wetland Care:

William Abel reported that he has spent \$16,000 approx since Christmas, aside from any Banrock projects. The Board deal with every application upon its merits and have only one application awaiting consideration. The spending on wetlands has been more than in the past.

Wairio Wetland:

Jim Law reported on this major project. Jim Law showed exact photos of where the site is and some further photos after a flood. Planted 700 trees in Stage one and now in Stage two have placed a wall (not as high) and the existing fence is being repaired by Landcorp. 1st August 2007 work day scheduled to plant further trees.

Have striven for a larger community involvement and have two local schools; South Wairarapa Rotary; Wellington Regional Council, and Taratahi Agricultural Training Centre involved.

The partnership with DOC is working well; the new area manager has a farming background.

A local Rotary club has donated \$5000 towards Wairio. They want to fund local environmental projects so we could be fortunate in the future also. There is growing awareness of what we are doing at Wairio and members can be very proud of what we are achieving.

A big vote of thanks goes to Don Bell and Howard Egan for all their hard work that has been done to date.

Thanks were extended to Jim Law for finalising the Memorandum of Understanding with DOC for Stage one and two (five year plan) which also raised our profile.

Opuatia Wetland:

John Bishop reported on the second partnership project with DOC; a large project in the Waikato.

The Memorandum of Understanding is currently with DOC, when finalised expect to put the strategic plan together and decide what activities need to be done in the next two or three years. A breeding area is planned, a large expansive site next to Environmental Waikato land. Chris Cant (Chapter Chairman) and John Bishop are working together on this.

General Business:

Ian Jansen spoke on the old Kapiti Coast settling ponds of which the Kapiti Coast District Council is attempting, over the next 20 years, to turn into a 5 hectare wetland.

Jim Campbell advised that Ducks Unlimited have given \$7500 to the Trimble Foundation. The Masterton District Council was left money by Dr Montfort Trimble to promote public afforestation in the region. On the land purchased at Rewanui, there is a farm pond suitable to be turned into a wetland. Jim will keep us informed of its progress.

Chris Thomas advised that he is in contact with the people at the National Wetland Trust in Rangiriri where they are developing wetland gardens and heritage trails. He will keep us informed of their progress.

Ian Jensen requested that a better effort be put into public relations especially notifying events in Flight before they occur, so they could have attended if wished rather than reporting on what happened.

Sandra Pipes asked that members remember to advise any change of email addresses.

Ray Hayward asked that the Board consider that Jack Worth's Life Membership be transferred to Clare Worth, in honour of all the years' work Jack put into Ducks Unlimited. Agreed.

Strategic Plan

Flight Magazine:

Gail and Peter Isaac were in attendance. Gail requested that she be sent more high resolution photos and text, and there has been a good response since last year.

Self Promotion:

Education DVD is available, contact Ross Cottle for a copy.

Making progress, wetland developments like Wairio are making a difference.

Website:

Anthony Griffin, webmaster, has redesigned the page, making it easier to handle updates, the Board are investigating whether we have another website or combine the Wetland and DU while increasing the profile of wetland care. The website is moving away from a lot of colour as its more environmental friendly. It was requested that photos be forwarded to Flight (Gail) who will then forward to Anthony for posting on the website.

Thanks were extended to Anthony for the work done on the website.

Stuart and Patsy Morrison – regards from DU Canada.

Special Business:

Parera (Grey Duck)

Chris Bindon asked to speak to the meeting regarding his concerns about the downturn in numbers and the interbreeding of the grey duck with mallard. Although some type of the hybrid form will be around for some time, he believes that some long-term planning is required now, to avoid the extension of the species in New Zealand.

General consensus was that this was not necessary at this time.

Closure: The President thanked the Board for their work throughout the year.

The meeting closed at 10.15am

Other Activities over the 33rd AGM weekend

Wetland Tour: Wairakei Pastoral Developments

Saturday Dinner: Lifetime Achievement awarded to: Di Pritt

Bill Barratt Trophy awarded to: Graham Berry

Sunday Talk: Tamsin Ward-Smith, Cape Kidnappers and Ocean Beach Wildlife Preserve Manager.

President's Report 2008

In the last 12 months it seems that the work of Ducks Unlimited is becoming more and more well-known throughout the country.

We have received a request for funds from a group trying to purchase a Wetlands of Significance on the Otago Estuary which is in danger of being lost forever.

Hopefully our contribution will help inspire others to view the project favorably as well.

Our goal of starting one new major project every two years is right on track with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Waikato branch of the Department of Conservation to commence restoration work on the Opuatia Wetland north of Hamilton.

Joint venture talks are just starting with DOC in Palmerston North with the intention of doing restoration work on the Moutoa Wetland in the Foxton area.

Wairio is progressing well with the earthworks for Stage 3 and a very successful planting day on Stage 2 has just been completed.

Pateke is moving along well with a large number of captive-bred birds being released at traditional sites as well as a couple of new ones.

Our thanks go to Banrock Station Wines for their continued support in this area.

Including large and small areas approximately \$40,000 has been spent on wetlands this year.

Membership still continues to be of concern to the Board but what is of greater concern is the lack of people willing to step up and relieve the pressure on the small band doing all the work.

I would like to thank the Board for their work and support throughout the year and a very special thanks to Sandra Pipes for all the work she does in administration.

Ross Cottle

President

Ducks Unlimited New Zealand Inc.

Wetland Care Report

from William Abel

So far this year we have worked on three projects.

Liz Brooks in Fielding has created a new wetland development on her property that we have contributed towards. (*See story on p.6*)

The Elliotts of Pahiatua have made another pond on their farm and we have contributed to this.

Bruce Ebbert on the Pahiatua track has an existing dam of approximately 10 acres that we have helped extend substantially, adding breeding areas and good wetland margins, and we have contributed to this as well. Bruce allows the public access to this wetland.

The funding of Wairio is also an ongoing project, but aside from that the total to date is \$10100.

We have another application from Geoff Reid in the Wairarapa, which we are considering.

Royal Swan

A good year with approximately 15 cygnets available, 12 of which are with Anne at Peacock Springs near Christchurch. They are unsexed presently and anxiously awaiting Ross and his warm hands for this fulfilling part of their life. There are plenty of people wanting them but this will depend on how the sexes balance out.



New Member Liz Brook and her wetland

Liz Brook of Feilding has a new project and is building a wetland. She writes: "The pond (dam) was completed in February, and as there is a constantly running spring, even in the drought, the water started building up straight away, but only very slowly at first.

"Finally we did get a bit of rain and the level went up a bit more. A couple of paradise ducks took up residence almost straight away. They are very noisy and there is no way to sneak up when they are around!



"Slowly as we had more rain the amount of water has increased. Then the duck shooting season arrived, and with it a number of mallard ducks. I think there are about 30 on the pond now. You can see some of them in the background of the photo (right).

"I have not got the fencing done yet, so have not started

planting. The only thing I have done is put grass and chicory seed along the top and on the outside of the dam. It is growing.

Gary Thomson did a great job with the bulldozer and landscaping work, and has been back to check that there are no leaks. All seems to be well at this stage".



Southern end of Green Lake, Tuhua. This is where the last known brood of four pateke ducklings were sighted in summer of 1952/3 by Auckland University field party. No more pateke were seen on Tuhua until the release in 2006. Below is Black Lake, release and feeder site. (Story p.7)



Wairio Planting Day in May

Another planting took place in May at South Wairarapa's 100ha Wairio Block. 500 trees were planted with the help of children from Kahutara and Pirinoa schools. This stage three of the joint venture between Ducks Unlimited and DOC, also involved the Greater Wellington Regional Council. The planting day took place with about a hundred people from the Greater Wellington Regional Council, Ducks Unlimited volunteers, Wairio Block committee members and teachers and parents of the schoolchildren who worked their little socks off.

Using a bulldozer to do the earthworks landscaping, a line was cleared for the fence, the area was moulded some more and a low wall was built. Only the low-lying areas which can be converted into wetlands will be dug out and planted. There is now permanent water and wildfowl are now making homes there and breeding.

During the day Don Bell, land management officer for the Regional Council, gave informative talks on the whys and wherefores, and explaining the trees and their habitat - trees including mingimingi, ribbonwood, cabbage tree, flax, kahikatea, kowhai, manuka, totara and carex secta.

This area had formerly been a wetland, but was drained in the 1960s to turn it into farmland. Financial support in the past three years has come from Ducks Unlimited, Banrock Station Wines, the Wairarapa Branch of Forest and Bird and the South Wairarapa Rotary.

Pirinoa School has only two teachers so one went with the group whilst the other stayed with the remaining pupils. Also a couple of parents went to help with transporting children.



Zoe Thurston and Joshua Oakly of Kahutara School



Michayla Beaver and Monica Vollebregt of Kahutara School



Above: Puhi Te Whaiti and Jacob Morison both age nine from Pirinoa School



Left: Pirinoa School's Daniel Aburn (10) at the front and Corey Dixon (11)

Above left: Pirinoa School's Daniel Aburn at front left, Robyn Warren (Parent), Puhi Te Whaiti (in pink), William Warren in foreground with back to camera, Jacob Morison on right. The two men are at this stage unidentified, but could be from DOC

Pateke Report on the Crater Lakes

John Heaphy reports:

The last update was March 2008 which detailed the supplementary release of 29 captive-reared pateke onto Black Lake Tuhua, on 25 March 2008.

I did a day trip into the crater lakes on 7 May, 43 days after their release, which was the first available opportunity to check on their progress since the release.

Arrived in crater at 10.30am and departed at dusk. Did several counts of both lakes, minimum seven pateke on Green Lake and 17 on Black Lake. All birds were spooky and only one band combination was recorded - a new bird (RM/RV). I suspect that a number more than the minimum 24 birds recorded were present as a number of birds seen initially disappeared into the raupo and didn't come back out once I had made my presence known.

Just before dusk a flock of 12 pateke were cavorting just in front of the feeders.

Although this visit was in the first week after opening of duckshooting only one pair of mallard and 10-12 grey duck were present.

The water level of both lakes and the linking wetland totalling 9ha has risen approx 300mm since the last visit. There was a torrential downpour at the beginning of this week (in Tauranga 82mm fell in one day, most of which fell in a couple of hours) and another heavy rainfall occurred two weeks ago.

Harrier hawks were again present and beating up the wetlands continuously but in particular were circling around the feeder area when I arrived.

Feeders:

All five 20L bucket feeders were installed together at the release site on Black Lake and completely filled with whole maize at the end of my last visit. This visit three feeders were empty or near empty and the other two feeders were half full, so perhaps 90 kg-plus of maize had been eaten over the six-week period. The rising water level had covered the bottoms of all five cages and I needed to wade out to them. In case of further water level rises, four feeders have now been shifted back three to five metres and one taken right back 30 metres to the wetland edge which is the site of the original release. All five feeders were again completed filled with whole maize. There are no feeders on Green Lake.

Summary:

Overall - so far, so good. It's comforting to know that the pateke are on to the maize, that they have learned to access feeders through the mesh cage holes and that the water level has significantly risen. Hopefully the original nine birds are still around to hold the new birds' wings and settle them in without too much aggro (See photos page 6).

*John Heaphy (who supplied the photos as well)
Conservation Officer (Protected Species and Islands)
Department of Conservation
Tauranga Area Office
Ph: Office - (07)5787677 DDI
- (07)5712722*

*At right: pateke feeders at
Black Lake*



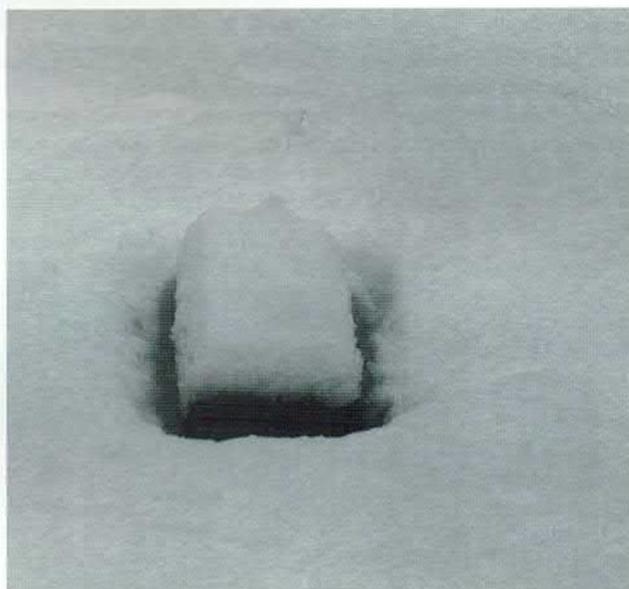
Travis wetland pateke report

John Skilton, Park Ranger/Project Manager, Travis Wetland, Christchurch City Council sent this pateke survival report:

Currently eight pateke survive on-site, four female and four male. They have at the Travis Wetland for 13 months - no deaths since 31 October - so that is 100% survival over the past eight months. John reports there could have been two instances of transmitter failure, one verified by colour band observation.

From October to December, pairs formed and mating and courtship behaviour was observed and pairs dispersed from the release site. The pateke activity became much less visible during daylight hours. There was no visual evidence of nests or nesting success.

Snowed under



Ferret trap under snow. Photo taken in July 2008 by Bruce Lambert in the Cobb valley, South Island, NZ.

Banrock Road

Tony Sharley of Banrock Station Wines returned to New Zealand in May for his 2008 Banrock Roadshow, visiting sites in the North Island this time, assessing a number of wetland conservation projects and visiting projects already approved for funding by Banrock's worldwide conservation scheme.

The tour began on Monday May 12, at the Tautari Wetland, part of the Maungatautari Ecological Island Trust, near Cambridge, Waikato. The Maungatautari Ecological Island Trust is the significant conservation project in the Waikato, initiated by residents and strongly supported by city and country community, local and regional councils and central government. It is a forested volcanic cone, rising above the Waikato basin near Cambridge. In August, the last section of what is the longest permanent pest-proof fence built in New Zealand – 47km – was completed, surrounding the forest edge of the mountain. As the remaining predators are removed the result will be a large self-sustaining eco-system with a diverse range of native flora and fauna. Tony Sharley was welcomed by the Vice-Chairman of the Maungatautari Trust, Gordon Stephenson, trustees, local iwi and conservation-minded members of the local community.

The next visit on Tuesday was to the Rotokare Scenic Reserve Trust, in Taranaki, near Eltham. This is a 230ha forested hill-country catchment, with extensive wetland and a 17.8ha natural lake. Mature tawa, rewarewa and mahoe-dominated forest is home to tui, bellbird, kereru, grey warbler and North Island robin as well as a variety of other bird species. It is hoped the area will soon be a safe habitat for pateke. Joe Menzies,

Chairman of the Trust Board and project head Kara Prankerd along with community members, press and volunteers welcomed Mr Sharley.

The Rotokare Scenic Reserve Trust was formed in 2004 and an intensive pest-trapping programme has succeeded in eradicating over 4000 pests. A predator-proof fence circles the 8.4km reserve perimeter. And over six hundred traps are checked monthly by a dedicated group of volunteers.

Moutoa, near Foxton was the site visited on Wednesday. Once part of the area that stretched from Foxton up the Manawatu flood plain to Tokomaru, this is the site of the very last remnant of flax-planting done for the fibre industry, upstream from the internationally-recognised bird sanctuary of the Manawatu Estuary, which has received support from Wetland Care New Zealand and Banrock Station Wines on two previous occasions. Moutoa now suffers from the drainage of the surrounding area and from grazing pressure. Restoration of this historic area would also help support the many wetland species which rely on the Manawatu River and Estuary.

Those present at Moutoa included DU New Zealand Director and Manawatu/Hawes Bay chair Neil Candy, Wetland Care New Zealand director and DU member William Abel, DOC Area Manager Jason Roxburgh, President of the Foxton Waterfowl and Wetland Club Richard George, Regional Manager Wellington Fish and Game Phil Teal, members of the press and many other interested community members.

On Thursday, Te Wherowhero Lagoon, 25 km south of Gisborne near Muriwai, was the next visit.

Twenty trees were planted in the ceremony to start off the Restoration

Photo below: Tony Sharley pictured at Te Wherowhero with Sally Foxley, Ian Foxley, Rullon Kahuroa, Anthony Cresswell, Polly Wahitiri and grandson Ereatar Enari, and Kui Emerson.



At Rotokare Scenic Reserve, from left Joe Menzies, Kara Prankerd, Taranaki Daily News' Richard Woodd with Tony Sharley.



Part of the Maungatautari predator fence



Photo left: Tony Sharley and Polly Wahitiri plant a ngaio tree - one of many at the ceremony at Te Wherowhero Lagoon



Right: Visit to Moutoa near Foxton - old flax fields.

Photo right: Teachers and pupils of Muritai School, Muritai, near Te Wherowhero Lagoon, with the cheque presented by Tony Sharley of Banrock Station Wines to help with the restoration project.



Show 2008

Programme, after a tour of the Lagoon. Children of the Muritai School performed a haka. Mr Sharley then presented on behalf of Banrock Station a cheque to the Friends of Te Wherowhero Lagoon in support of the Restoration Programme for this 200ha nationally-recognised wetland/estuarine lagoon. The Friends of Te Wherowhero Lagoon include representatives of the four landowners as well as the local iwi Ngati Tamanuhiri. Also present were representatives of the Gisborne District Council, Department of Conservation and QEII Trust, children from the Muriwai School and local volunteers.

The restoration plan is for the protection of coastal plants and seabird/wading birds which inhabit Te Wherowhero Lagoon. This involves trapping of predators, weed control and planting of native species, and funding is necessary for the purchase of traps, for plants and employment of contractors for weed control and elimination of predators.

Friday was the day 30 pateke were re-introduced to Hawkes Bay at the Ocean Beach Wildlife Preserve at Cape Kidnappers near Napier, arriving by helicopter, having arrived at Hawkes Bay Airport from Peacock Springs earlier by plane.

The Cape Kidnappers and Ocean Beach Wildlife Preserve is a private initiative of local landowners. It is hoped that a new geographically-independent population of pateke will establish itself in the specially-created predator-free Preserve, separate from the communities of pateke in the north of the North Island.

The huge sand dune system at Ocean Beach contains a significant wetland system. The new new 9.5km predator-proof fence stretches across the

neck of Cape Kidnappers to Ocean Beach and will preserve some of New Zealand's most precious natural habitat over 2,200ha of land and dune system.

Over a hundred people witnessed the release of the birds into a pond inside the preserve. As pateke had disappeared from the region about 100 years ago, this was considered an emotional homecoming.

Tony Sharley presented a cheque to Wetland Care New Zealand to assist with the Preserve's pateke release – organised through the Department of Conservation's Pateke Recovery Programme. There will be daily monitoring for the first month thanks to the minute radio transmitters fitted to each pateke. These will help also with the breeding, survival and whereabouts of the pateke in this initial stage.

Cape Kidnappers is owned by American businessman Julian Robertson and he is partnering with the Hansen, West and Lowe families who own the adjacent Ocean Beach Wilderness block, to create the wildlife preserve. Tamsin Ward-Smith is the Manager of the Cape Kidnappers and Ocean Beach Wildlife Preserve.

During Tony Sharley's visit, Showdown Productions' Rural Delivery - TV1 on Saturdays at 07:30 - interviewed him and he appeared on June 14. TVNZ on Demand:

http://tvnzondemand.co.nz/content/ondemand_index/ondemand_skin on your broadband computer.

(Photos by Peter Isaac and Tony Sharley)

Photo below: Delight on the faces of, from left, Tony Sharley, Jay Robertson and Andy Lowe with the cheque at Cape Kidnappers



Photo above: At Cape Kidnappers, photo shows from left Mike Kelly, Phil Sargeson and Kevin Evans, coordinator of DOC's Pateke Captive Breeders Programme

Below: Pateke release at Cape Kidnappers - crowd scene.



Photo below: Debbie Latoa, Senior Imported Brands Manager for Constellation New Zealand, with a soon-to-be-released pateke at Cape Kidnappers



Conservationists in Taiwan and China unite over plight of endangered species

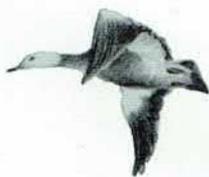
Taiwanese and mainland Chinese conservationists are joining hands to save the Chinese crested tern from extinction by urging fishermen to stop collecting and eating the birds' eggs. The bird which is white with a black-and-white crest, migrates to eastern Chinese coasts between May and September to escape the heat of South Asia, although they have not been seen outside of China or Taiwan, officially.

The sea bird was spotted for the first time in 2000 on Matsu island, one kilometer from China's mainland coast. Authorities there have since stepped up the monitoring of the bird and created several sanctuaries on the island.

Although the Taiwanese have stopped eating sea birds' eggs in recent years it is believed that Chinese fishermen often sneak onto Matsu to collect the eggs, prized as a delicacy in parts of China, according to Chang Shou-hua, head of the Matsu Birdwatching Society.

A Chinese survey conducted over recent successive breeding seasons found that the number of crested terns had fallen to 50 birds, about half the population found three years ago, according to Birdlife International, a conservation group based in Cambridge, England. If protection efforts are not stepped up, extinction could face the Chinese crested tern within five years, the group warns.

A group of conservationists from Juishan islands off east China visited the Matsu sanctuary recently and agreed to work towards the bird's preservation, first by seeking legislation to bar fishermen from collecting the seabird's eggs. The Chinese and Taiwanese have also agreed to begin a joint survey during the birds' migration season next (northern) summer, to determine the size of their population.



Kakapo viewing

The Department of Conservation kakapo recovery team is bringing six kakapo chicks to town for a public viewing at the Invercargill Workingmen's Club. This viewing in late June is a rare and special opportunity to see the newest additions to the small but increasing kakapo population.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for the public to see the chicks before they go back to their island sanctuary," said DOC National Kakapo Recovery Team Leader Emma Neill.

The chicks were taken to a Nelson facility in April to be hand-raised because not enough rimu fruit had ripened for their mothers to feed them. After the Invercargill viewing the birds will be flown to Whenua Hou/Codfish Island, the off-shore predator free island near Stewart Island, where they will be closely watched by members of the National Kakapo Recovery Team.

A recent public appearance in Nelson attracted more than 5000 people.

Department programme manager for outlying islands Pete McClelland said the team was expecting similar numbers to come to the Invercargill viewing, which could mean long queues.

Kakapo Facts

- * Kakapo - 2kg in weight and 64cm long on average - are managed on two islands - Whenua Hou/Codfish Island, a 1400ha island about 3km off the coast of Stewart Island and Anchor Island in Dusky Sound, Fiordland.

- * They feed on seeds, fruits, leaves and roots, and have a strong musty smell.

- * They are nocturnal and solitary.

- * Although flightless, kakapo are excellent climbers. They use their beak and claws to climb high into trees. They use their wings to slow their descent when they jump from height.

- * Females lay a clutch of between one and four eggs.

- * A high number of infertile eggs are produced by female kakapo.

- * Fertility is confirmed using a method called candling - holding the egg up to torch light in a dark environment to see if an embryo is forming.

- * In the breeding season, male kakapo make a low booming sound to attract females that can be heard several kilometres away.

- * The most recent breeding seasons on Whenua Hou/Codfish Island have coincided with the fruiting of podocarp forest, and particularly rimu trees, on the island.

- * During the breeding season a large number of volunteers will assist the kakapo recovery programme on Whenua Hou/Codfish Island.

Up to four full-time staff work on Whenua Hou/Codfish Island year-round making sure the birds are safe, healthy and well-fed. They only see or handle kakapo once or twice a year for their regular health checks. Most of the monitoring is carried out from a distance through the use of radio telemetry.

"The chicks get as much enjoyment from the occasion as the people. They handled the attention well," Ms Neill said.

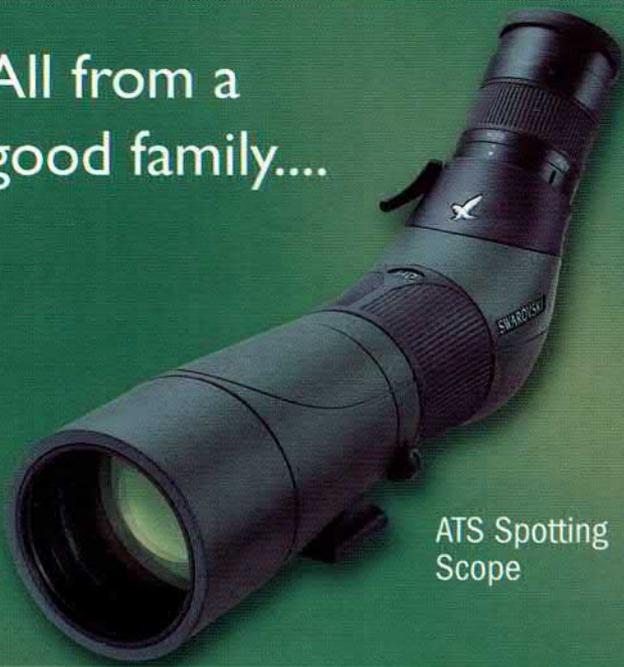
Southern Islands Area Manager Andy Roberts said he hoped Southlanders made the most of this opportunity. "It isn't everyday one gets the chance to meet one of the world's rarest birds."

Only 91 kakapo, including the chicks, remain alive today.

The Kakapo Recovery Programme is a partnership between the Department of Conservation, Rio Tinto Alcan NZ Ltd and the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society.

The Kakapo Recovery Programme has created a new website for people to learn about what's happening (www.kakapo.org.nz), which includes regular updates from field staff living on Whenua Hou.

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This abridged article appeared in the June 22, 2007 issue of the National Business Review.

Sir Neil Isaac (1915-1987) was born in Timaru, working in construction before volunteering for the New Zealand Army during World War II. He met British-born Diana while travelling on the same ship to India after the war. They married in Delhi in 1946 and spent a short time building irrigation dams as contractors in remote areas of India.

After settling in New Zealand, the Isaacs established The Isaac Construction Company and bought the present Harewood property during the 1950s. It was an era of substantial new development in New Zealand, and the company prospered, quickly growing to become one of the leading construction companies in the region.

It progressively purchased adjoining land, cleared it of gorse and quarried. They found that by introducing topsoil and planting the quarried areas, mostly with natives, they could create a much-improved environment with sheltered areas and shallow waterways, which are ideal habitat for native birds.

The Isaac Wildlife Trust, formed in 1977, ensures this environment, now known as Peacock Springs Wildlife Park and The Diana Isaac Conservation Trust, would be retained for the people of Christchurch to enjoy. It covers 1450ha and in future will feature walking paths and horse tracks.

Sir Neil was knighted in 1986 for his services to conservation and the community. He is the grandson of Dunedin pioneer settler Johnny Jones, and was admitted to the Business Hall of Fame in 1999.

London Ponds

Did you know that there are three kinds of waterfowl resident in the Round Pond of Kensington Gardens in London?

First of all - swans. As they fly over London they can see the pond from afar, know it's friendly and with plenty of donated food, so they visit.

Then the Canada goose. Even in London they can be overwhelming in numbers, so periodically park rangers take ruthless action early in the morning. There are some pink-beaked geese as well.

Ducks complete the picture - Lots of them, of course.

The Round Pond-which is actually oval and has a decorative rim - is a human excavation. Queen Caroline, Queen consort of George II, came from Germany and was an orphan. Sir Isaac Newton, the famous polymath, became one of her mentors. She came to Britain as Princess of Wales in 1714, when George I took over the throne. George II was the last British sovereign to fight in battle. Handel wrote "Zadok the Priest" for his coronation and this lovely choral and orchestral work has been produced at every coronation since.

Queen Caroline can be said to have been responsible for the avenues of large trees in a pattern of lines over 300ac. The West Borne stream formed a series of marshy ponds in this period of 18th century London. Queen Caroline created the stretch of lake known as the Long Water and the Serpentine, divided by the Serpentine bridge, and she insisted on a big fowl-pond bordering her Broad Walk which became the Round Pond.

Pukaha Mt Bruce

Pukaha Mt Bruce took delivery of two takahe from Mana Island in early June to accompany its lonely male Bud, whose long-time female companion had died earlier this year.

But sadly one of the new birds died in mid-June. It took ill and despite all efforts, died. DOC's Wairarapa Area Manager Chris Lester said the birds were administered routine worming medications on arrival at Mount Bruce and this procedure seemed to have caused an adverse reaction. Takahe are no longer bred at the centre but two birds are held at Mt Bruce enabling visitors to view them.

Takahe were thought to be extinct until their rediscovery in 1948 in Fiordland, where around 130 birds remain. DOC's work with takahe includes establishing breeding pairs on four islands: Maud Island in the Marlborough Sounds, Mana Island off Kapiti coast, Kapiti Island north of Mana again on the west coast of Wellington and Tiritiri Matangi Island in the Hauraki Gulf.

The plight of takahe encouraged Wairarapa farmer and keen ornithologist Elwyn Welch to take four takahe chicks back to his farm in 1958 to be fostered by bantam hens. The New Zealand Wildlife Service took over Welch's work in 1962, setting up a native bird management reserve in the Mount Bruce forest.

Tenick Dennison compiled this report from the Ornithological Society of New Zealand Wairarapa Branch's Field Trip for bird-count and Twitchathon at Henley Lake, Masterton in May 2008

Black swan	13
Mute Swan	3
Canada Goose	73
Mallard	214
Shoveller	14
Paradise	5
Pekin Duck	13
Muscovy	4
Cahuga	3
Coot	13
SW Plover	3
BF Dotterel	6
Black Shag	7
Little Shag	2
Pukeko	5



Takahe.

LANDMARK DECISION FOR WAIRARAPA OXBOW LAAGOON

In a landmark decision in May, the Greater Wellington Regional Council declined a dairy farmer's application for a resource consent renewal to continue irrigating his farm from bores immediately adjacent to the 10ha Taumata Lagoon, south of Carterton, in the Wairarapa.

Four weeks after the completion of a two-and-a-half day Environmental Hearing, GWRC communicated the decision to all Hearing participants.

In its decision the GWRC recognised Taumata Lagoon as a Wetland of National Importance, an outstanding oxbow lagoon, and also recognised the many unique features of the lagoon environment. In fact Taumata Lagoon and its environs represent one of the last vestiges of New Zealand's unique natural history on the floor of the Wairarapa valley. The area is close to 30ha in total; over one third of which is under a QEII National Trust Open Space Covenant and all 30ha have the GWRC Key Native Ecosystem status over them.

The decision is an important one for all wetlands under similar pressure and shows that the often-maligned Resource Management Act can work for the benefit of wetlands.

QEII National Trust Life Members Sylvia and Neil Hayes own 10.4ha of the lagoon and native bush, and this is the area covered by the QEII Open Space Covenant.

Irrigation adjacent to the lagoon started in earnest in early 2004, with one bore only 80 metres from the lagoon and the other 120 metres from the lagoon, at an irrigation rate of 48 litres/second, 24 hours per day, seven days per week – resulting in well over 100,000,000 million litres of water disappearing during the first six weeks of irrigation, destroying all aquatic weed, adversely affecting adjacent native bush and seriously affecting huge numbers of wildlife species that inhabit the area – an area that features over 100 different native trees and plants, including: kahikatea, totara, matai, maire, titoki, tawa, cabbage and many more, and over 50 different species of wildlife, including: shoveler, grey teal, grey duck, black swan, falcon, native pigeon, morepork, tui, bellbird, and many more.

During three years of irrigation the owners of Taumata Lagoon became greatly concerned when the lagoon level plummeted by one metre in a few weeks, native trees began to die and wildlife started disappearing – hence the Environmental Hearing, and an excellent outcome for the New Zealand environment.

The objectors to continued irrigation were – the owners of the lagoon, the QEII National Trust (Aalbert Rebergen), the Department of Conservation (Wellington and Masterton), Registered Surveyor Barry Silvester, Michael Woodcock, Green Party Candidate for the 2008 General Election, hydrologist Dr Mark Gyopari and ecologist Dr Paul Blaschke, all of whom provided compelling evidence on the dramatic effects irrigation was having on the lagoon and its environs, and on the need to protect such an ecologically-important area.

Mr Hayes has told Flight, "Those opposing continued irrigation take this opportunity to thank all supporters and the Greater Wellington Regional Council for its Landmark Decision".

Recent development - mid June 2008

Nigel Corry - Greater Wellington Regional Council Environmental Manager, informed Neil and Sylvia Hayes and their supporters on 17 June that the Herricks have formally lodged an appeal. There are 30 days to notify a counter to this Appeal on the part of the Hayes contingent.

It appears that in the meantime irrigation can continue and Neil Hayes has said they will continue to monitor water levels in the Taumata Lagoon. He added that since irrigation ceased in late March the lagoon, in spite of only 200mm of rain, has come up 650mm.



Sylvia and Neil Hayes - photo courtesy Lynda Feringa, Wairarapa Times-Age.

Magpie Vilified Unfairly?

The relative importance of Australian magpies (*Gymnorhina tibicen*) as nest predators of rural birds in New Zealand

Abstract Australian magpies (*Gymnorhina tibicen*) have been recorded as predators at nests of other birds in New Zealand but their importance as a predator in rural areas, where they are most common, has not been previously quantified.

We continuously monitored 38 nests of seven species in rural areas over two successive breeding seasons using time-lapse video recording to determine the proportion that were preyed on by magpies compared to other animals in this ecosystem. Twenty-two lethal events were recorded over the two breeding seasons; magpies were responsible for only one of these. A further eight scavenging events were also recorded; magpies were not responsible for any of these. Harriers (*circus approximans*), ship rats (*rattus rattus*), and cats (*felis catus*) were the main predators and were responsible for 36, 32, and 23% of lethal events respectively. A pukeko (*porphyrio porphyrio*) was also recorded preying on nest contents on one occasion. Other known nest predators such as Norway rats (*rattus norvegicus*), possums (*Trichosurus vulpecula*), hedgehogs (*erinaceus europaeus*) and ruru (*Ninox novaeseelandiae*) did not appear in any recorded frame although present in the study areas. Our results suggest that magpies are not serious nest predators in rural areas in comparison to ship rats, cats, and harriers, and that controlling magpies in rural areas will not significantly improve the nesting success of other birds.

D. Morgan and J. R. Waas, Department of Biological Sciences, University of Waikato - Email: dm30@waikato.ac.nz

J. Innes

Landcare Research

Private Bag 3127

Hamilton, New Zealand

New Zealand Journal of Zoology, 2006, Vol. 33: 17-29

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New Zealand stands up well at international re-introduction conference

Kevin Evans of the Brown Teal Recovery Group attended a novel conference in Chicago in May, organised by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and the Lincoln Park Zoo. Also from New Zealand was zoologist Philip Seddon of the University of Otago in Dunedin. Over 200 scientists and wildlife managers from 31 countries met for the first time, addressing the issues of re-introduction of rare species throughout the world. One fact is that in some cases, re-introduced species can seem to cope well at first, only to succumb to the same forces which forced near-extinction upon them in the first place. Another element is that data is in many cases not available for research purposes.

In spite of this, where in the 1990s about 100 species were re-introduced worldwide, by 2008 700 species were re-introduced – 74% of them mammals and birds.

And New Zealand astonished the conference with the fact that 80% of our bird re-introductions have seen success.

There can be many reasons why a species will not settle after being released into what humans consider to be ideal conditions. An example is the red kites in Britain – who spurn the high-quality habitat designed for them and crowd in with other kites in central Wales, even after 40 years. Newly-released wildlife may also need to learn hunting and parenting and recognition of predators.

The IUCN defines the term 'success' in reintroduction biology as a self-sustaining population that requires minimal long-term management. Virginia Morell in her article for *Science Vol 320, 9 May 2008*, says that "for instance, dozens of bird species are thriving on their own again in New Zealand, where scientists are now bringing back reptiles, invertebrates and plants – all the key players in island ecosystems that were lost after rats arrived on European ships".

"Some of the Kiwis' success is due to the government 'practical approach'" said Ian Jamieson, behavioural ecologist at Otago University. He said that with fewer regulations, managers can just go in and do the job, including all invasive species. Elsewhere, as in the United States and Europe, a tangle of government agencies may be involved in any re-introduction, and managers must juggle competing interests.

It was pointed out at the conference that without the support of local communities, re-introduction projects are doomed to fail.

Don't we just know it!

Ferrets profit from summer

Long hot summer conditions provided ideal breeding conditions for predators throughout New Zealand 2007/8. An example is the increased number of ferrets found at Pukaha Mt Bruce wildlife reserve, where, in April, ferret invasion caused the first kiwi deaths since the Bank of New Zealand Save the Kiwi programme started in 2002. A review of predator control in the forest is being undertaken by DOC and its restoration partners, Greater Wellington Regional Council and Horizons Regional Council.



Photo: Bruce Lambert.

Northland waterfowl refuge

As winter settles in, a reminder to members of the existence of WillowHaven Waterfowl Refuge near Whangarei, established in 1992. Managed by DU member Vyndie Smith and her husband Winston, the refuge specialises in the care of mostly wild and protected species of waterfowl from the Northland area, who are orphaned, abandoned, injured or sick. The birds are cared for by volunteers of the WillowHaven Waterfowl Refuge, Inc., in large secure cages until they are of suitable age and fitness to be released into safe places in the countryside. There are gardens and a native bush arboretum with a stream with regenerating plantings, as well as exotic trees, and a very large ornamental pond. Visits can be made from September to the end of April. Visitors - and donations - are most welcome.

Phone 09 430 2079 or 021 237 8927

WillowHaven Waterfowl Refuge Inc.

210 Abbey Caves Road, Whangarei (just six minutes from the Town Basin).

Chatham Island Snipe released

One of New Zealand's least-known rare birds is making a comeback. Twenty Chatham Island snipe were released into a privately-owned reserve on Pitt Island on 28 April.

Only 33 people live on Pitt Island, the second largest of the Chatham Islands. Members of the community assisted the Department of Conservation with catching the snipe on nearby Rangatira (South East Island).

Snipe are distantly related to godwits, and formerly occurred throughout New Zealand. Following the introduction of rats and cats they became confined to remote islands free of these predators.

The Chatham Island snipe survived on 219ha Rangatira and came close to extinction before the island was made a reserve in 1961. There are now over 1000 birds on the island. Twenty-three were transferred to nearby Mangere Island in 1970, where they thrived. Both Rangatira and Mangere Island Nature Reserves are closed to the public. The release of snipe on Pitt Island will make them accessible for viewing for the first time. The birds were released into Ellen Elizabeth Preece Conservation Covenant, which has been surrounded by a cat-proof fence since 2001.

Landowner John Preece was delighted to see the snipe returned to Pitt Island, where they died out in the 1890s following cat introduction. "This is why we set this land aside – to help the forest and the birds recover. It is a privilege to be able to care for these rare birds, and to be able to share them with the community and their guests."

The transfer team was led by Dr Colin Miskelly of the Department of Conservation, who first studied Chatham Island snipe on Rangatira in 1983.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

David Armistead of Woodville
Graeme Hickcock &
Steve Berry-Smith of Huntly
Len Mahood of Ngaruawahia
Marc Jary of Nelson
Lauren McIntryne of Fielding
Allan Elliott of Pahiatua
Gordon MacPhee of Marton
Roger Smailes of Palmerston North
Buzz Rathbone of Rotorua
David Last of Woodville
Nick Stewart of Havelock North

Threatened status of New Zealand birds - new listing

In 2002, the Department of Conservation developed a new system for classifying organisms according to their risk of extinction (Molloy et al. 2002).

This system allows the classification of conservation status/risk of extinction of all organisms known to occur in a wild state in New Zealand. Endemics, non-endemic natives, migrants, vagrants, and introduced and naturalised species are all included, as are taxa which have not been formally described. This is not a priority-setting system in the way that the listing of Molloy & Davis (1992, 1994) was, so does not include information on taxonomic distinctiveness, or on human values.

It is a resource for priority setting, among other functions, rather than a priority list in itself. Two lists of threatened taxa assessed by these criteria have been published (Hitchmough 2002, Hitchmough et al. 2007). During the course of these listings, opportunities for improvements to the system itself were identified, and as a result a new manual with changed categories and criteria and more explicit procedures has been published (Townsend et al. 2008).

In order to provide the most accurate information, the list is to be fully reviewed and updated every three years. The time has come to undertake this process again for birds, and we now wish to gather data to begin the reclassification of species under the new criteria. We would be very grateful for any submissions providing information on bird species or subspecies that you consider to be threatened. An expert panel will meet to review the classification of all New Zealand birds, on the basis of information supplied. Please contact us if you need any assistance or clarification about this questionnaire.

You can make an online submission or post, email or fax in your submission to:

Colin Miskelly, Conservation Analyst

Email: threatstatus@doc.govt.nz

Fax: +64 4 499 0077

Wellington Conservancy

PO Box 5086

Thorndon, Wellington

Going, going, gone

This is the list of birds assumed extinct, according to the the status of bird species as listed by Hitchmough et al. 2007. The full list of birds can be seen on DOC's website - <http://www.doc.govt.nz/templates/page.aspx?id=45789>.

Chatham Island bellbird - *Anthornis melanocephala*
 Chatham Island fernbird - *Bowdleria rufescens*
 Chatham rail - *Cabalus modestus*
 New Zealand quail - *Coturnix novaezelandiae*
 Dieffenbach's rail - *Gallirallus dieffenbachii*
 Huia - *Heteralocha acutirostris*
 New Zealand little bittern - *Ixobrychus novaezelandiae*
 Auckland Island merganser - *Mergus australis*
 Laughing owl - *Sceloglaux albifacies*
 Stephens Island wren - *Traversia lyalli*
 South Island piopio - *Turnagra capensis*
 North Island piopio - *Turnagra tanagra*
 Bush wren - *Xenicus longipes*
 South Island kokako - *Callaeas cinerea cinerea*
 Little Barrier Island snipe - *Coenocorypha aucklandica barrierensis*
 Stewart Island snipe - *Coenocorypha aucklandica iredalei*

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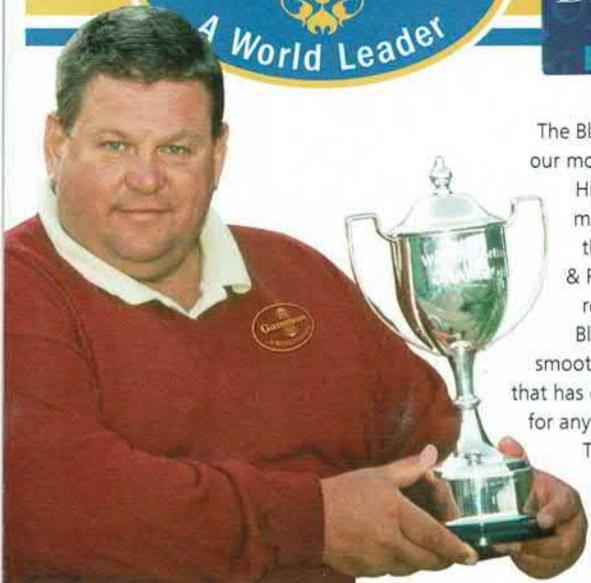
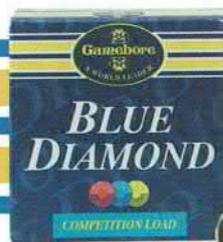
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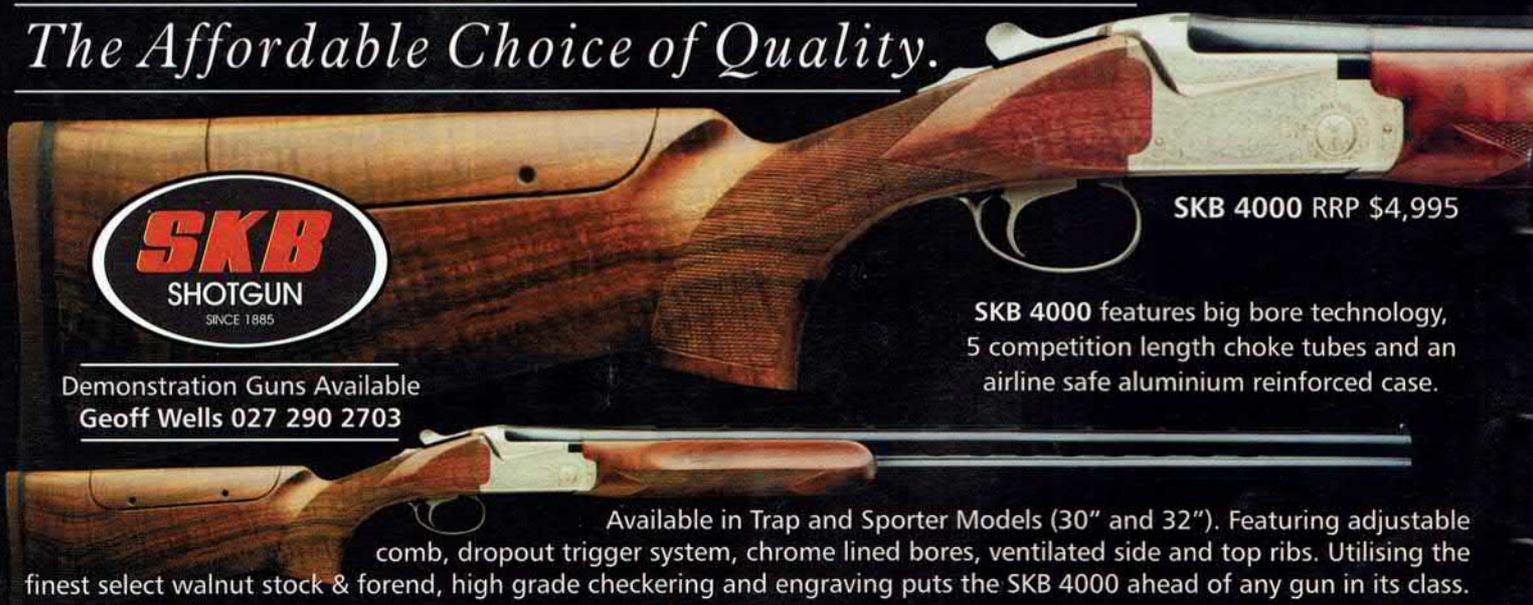
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White Gold Original	24gm	1400fps	7½, 9
White Gold Original	28gm	1400fps	7½, 8, 9
Black Gold	28gm	1500fps	7½
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