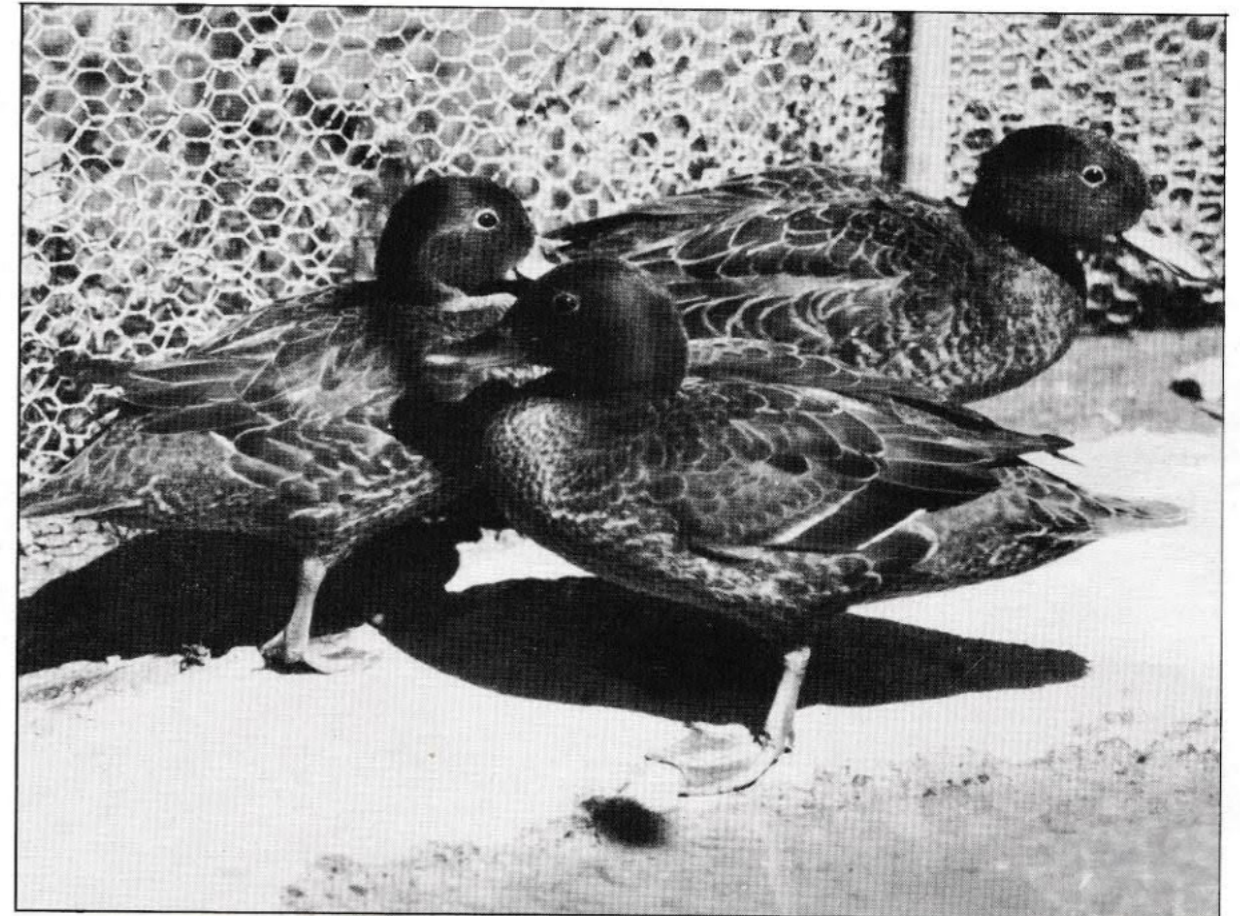


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New Zealand's rare waterfowl.



Captive reared Brown Teal

Population in the wild: Approx. 1,000
Distribution: Gt. Barrier Island &
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DUCKS UNLIMITED (N.Z) INC.,

PO BOX 74, HAMILTON, NEW ZEALAND

BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND OFFICIALS FOR 1982-1983

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VICE PRESIDENT: F.N. HAYES, 17 Wise Street, WAINUIOMATA.

SECRETARY: F.N. HAYES, 17 Wise Street, WAINUIOMATA.

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 J Glover, Hill Road, PAUATAHANUI

OTHER OFFICIALS:

Membership Secretary

Mrs J. Bronger, PO Box 403, TAURANGA

'FLIGHT' EDITOR

F.N. HAYES, 17 WISE STREET, WAINUIOMATA

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COVER PICTURE

A fine Wildlife Service photo of N.Z.'s rarest waterfowl — the Brown Teal.



Ducks Unlimited (N.Z.) Incorporated is a private, non-profit membership organisation dedicated to the preservation, restoration and maintenance of wetlands habitat in New Zealand and to the propagation of the country's rare waterfowl as a valuable natural resource. The organisation was founded in May 1974 by a group of far-sighted conservationists and incorporated by them in June 1975 at Wellington, New Zealand. The national headquarters mailing address is PO Box 74, Hamilton and the registered physical address is 84 Houchens Road, Hamilton. "Flight" is the official quarterly publication of Ducks Unlimited (N.Z.) Incorporated reaching 800 devoted members and friends concerned with waterfowl conservation. D.U. membership begins at \$3.00 p.a. for Junior to \$12.50 for Full membership, with provision for Trade and Life members. Membership of Ducks Unlimited carries with it subscription to this publication. To assure prompt delivery, members who move are urged to forward their new address along with current membership details to national headquarters. Letters and contributed manuscripts and photographs should be addressed to the "Flight" Editor. Views expressed by contributors are their own and do not necessarily constitute those of Ducks Unlimited (N.Z.) Incorporated.

"FLIGHT" IS PRINTED BY LITHOGRAPHIC SERVICES LTD, PETONE

EDITORIAL

A magazine/newsletter is the lifeblood of any organisation. A good publication will keep members informed on all association activities and will provide material which is interesting, and perhaps useful, to the majority of members. It will quite naturally attempt to promote the association's philosophy and at the same time carefully attempt to educate those with different philosophies.

However, all organisational magazines rely very heavily on a good input from members and as the new Editor of 'Flight' I will be seeking your assistance to develop 'Flight' into a major publication. All articles, photographs, letters and so on, will be gratefully received and I am particularly keen to see a 'Letters to the Editor' column quickly established. So if you have anything to comment on, or you need information on waterfowl management please write.

I hope that in each issue we may be able to incorporate a feature article covering some important aspects of waterfowl management.

Advertising is also an important part of most modern magazines and with our circulation increasing at a rapid rate we hope to attract some advertising interest; after all D.U. (U.S.A.) collected over one million dollars in one year's advertising revenue from Ducks Unlimited magazine.

The back page of this issue contains an advert from Winchester N.Z. Ltd., who have booked the back page for four issues. Winchester has only recently established its own subsidiary in New Zealand but during this time has made a dramatic impact on the sporting goods scene. Mainly through the work of the New Zealand Manager Ken Lowry, who besides being a dynamic businessman is a keen sportsman and ardent conservationist. The support from Winchester is the sort of support we have been looking for from the distributors of sporting goods and we thank Winchester for supporting our essential work with New Zealand waterfowl.

We must also thank the Ministry for Recreation & Sport which has again provided funds to assist with production costs of 'Flight'. Such support is most encouraging.

NEIL HAYES



DU NEWS

New Life Members

We are delighted to announce that Ms Rose Ward of Auckland and Mr J. Ward of Huntly have become Life Members. In forwarding her Life Membership subscription Ms Ward said she had decided to make her commitment to New Zealand's rare waterfowl. Ms Ward also mentioned her considerable interest in operation 'Branta' and of her respect for the magnificent Canada's. Knowing of Ms Ward's close ties with the farming community such comments are very pleasing.

Mr Ward of Huntly has been an enthusiastic D.U. member for many years and had developed the very creditable habit of sending D.U. \$50 per year. He has now decided to become a Life Member.

New Distinguished Members

Members will have noted, with delight, two new members listed in the June issue of 'Flight'. Notably Dr Ian Shearer, the Minister for the Environment, and his Excellency the United States Ambassador, Monroe Brown.

Membership Explosion

Members will have noted the impressive membership lists in recent issues of 'Flight'. Most of the credit for this membership explosion must go to the Hamilton Chapter who now have 150 Chapter members. D.U. total membership is now over 600, which is quite fantastic when one considers that D.U. is really a very new organisation.

Treasurer Retires

After eight years in various official positions Dudley Bell has decided to take a break from D.U. activities. Dudley was a founder member of D.U. and has done outstanding work as Vice-President, Gretel Supervisor and as Treasurer — in which capacity he was well assisted by his wife Lyn. The input by Dudley and Lyn, which has greatly helped to establish D.U. on a firm foundation, will be sadly missed. We are very grateful to them and hope that when their young family is a little older they will be keen to get back into the thick of it.

'Flight' Circulation

Members will appreciate that this new format for 'Flight' is an expensive project and we will only be able to maintain this style of publication with the complete support of members — mainly by way of prompt payment of subscriptions and, of course, by encouraging new membership. With the obvious need to keep costs down the D.U. Directors have decided to tighten up on their previously very flexible approach to 'Flight' circulation and that this edition will be the last that members who are unfinancial for 1980/81 will receive. Please renew your subscription promptly.

Waterfowl Breeders List

Ducks Unlimited is keen to establish a comprehensive list of members who keep waterfowl. If you are such a person we would be most grateful if you could complete the form below and post it to Anne & Bill Clinton-Baker who are co-ordinating the list for D.U.

WATERFOWL BREEDERS LIST

NAME	PHONE No.
ADDRESS	DO YOU ALLOW VIEWING BY APPOINTMENT? Yes/No
SPECIES IN COLLECTION	

Please return to Anne & Bill Clinton-Baker, Tupurupuru, R.D.4., MASTERTON.

1982 NATIONAL CONFERENCE — TOKAANU

REPORT ON 1982 ANNUAL CONFERENCE — TOKAANU

The annual conference, held on Saturday 10 July 1982 at THC Tokaanu was an outstanding success, in terms of attendance and the funds raised. 92 members attended the formal part of the meeting and numbers rose to 120 for the dinner and auction. Among conference participants were many children and young persons, a pleasing trend.

Formal minutes of the conference appear on other pages.

DU's auctioneer, Mr K.G.W. (Bill) Wilkinson did not disappoint his fans and his great performance in persuading participants to bid high for the magnificent and varied auction items was appreciated by all. After the payment of expenses, the net figure raised during the auction was \$5,100 — a fantastic result and a new record.

Also fantastic was the presentation of \$2,000 to D.U. by the Hamilton Chapter. At the end of the auction Murray Dench of the Hamilton Chapter presented D.U. President Paul Pirani with a cheque for \$2,000, which was raised by the Chapter at their Hootnanny, held on April 17th and attended by over 300 people. The presentation was warmly applauded and D.U. Directors would again like to thank the Hamilton Chapter for their outstanding contribution to D.U. affairs.

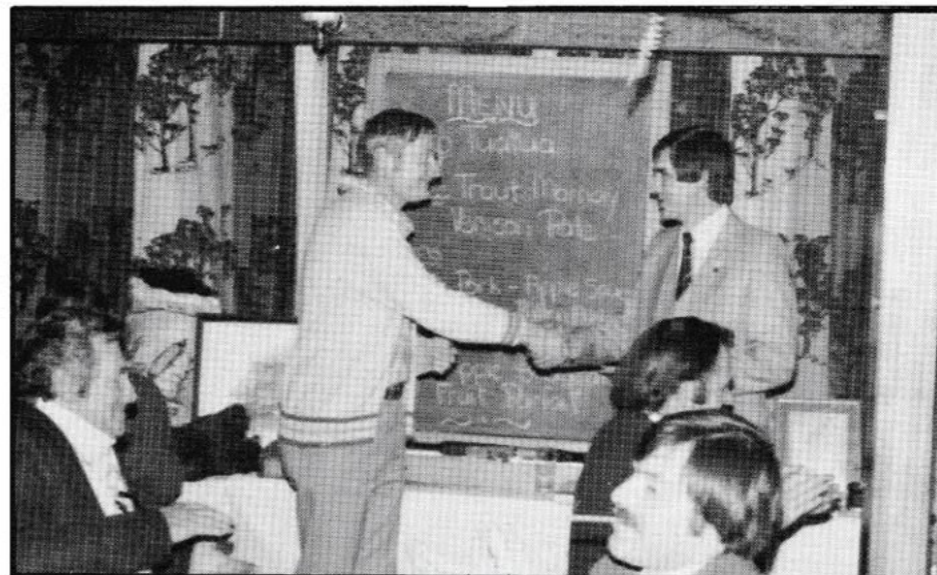
Special thanks to Bill Wilkinson and to Keith Barnett, proprietor of THC Tokaanu for the excellent arrangements and generosity. Fundraising items ranged from the extravagant to the inexpensive, innovative to practical. D.U. appreciates very much donations made by the following contributors and special thanks, too, to all those who donated at the last minute or anonymously (and whose names are not recorded here).

Keith Barnett & Pair waders, holiday weekend
THC Tokaanu for 2, Goods and Services.

Mr and Mrs Glen Butts	Camouflage shirt
Broadhead Stores	Wine glasses
Bill Barrett	Waterfowl publications
Mr and Mrs S. Bronger	Duck print cushions, snake skins, publications, citrus fruit, plants.
Messrs F.S.S. Bailey & M. Newcomb	Game King Shotmaker
D. Chetwin	Trout Flies
Jim Campbell	Solingen Knife, spinning fleeces, sacks of barley
Ducks Unlimited Inc USA	Waterfowl art, Armetale plates, Waterfowl decanters, Remington Clock, Carved Green-winged Teal on Box, Gunners Box
Du Pont New Zealand	Drums Du Pont Powder
Drews Jewellers	Pair Clocks
D.S. & Co Wairarapa	Camouflage hat
Don Eley	Stainless steel thermos flask, publications
A. Elliot	Waterfowl publications
Email Industries	Sportsmans Torch
John Gill	Waterfowl publications
Jim Glover	Pr Carolina wood ducks
Garry Girvan	Jim Beam decanter, Canada goose photography
F. Neil Hayes	Waterfowl publications, Prs Scaup, Pr Shoveller, Powder flask
Mr Hansen	Spinning fleece
David Hagerbaumer	2 art prints of artist's work
Hunting & Fishing Centre	Buck Knife
King & Henry	Shotgun carrying case

Kelvin Mackie	Framed waterfowl prints, duck calls
David McNeil	2 Prs Canada geese
NZ Field & Stream	Brass door plaque
Ohakune Pharmacy	Pr framed photographs, Canada geese
Mr & Mrs P.B.C. Pirani	Wooden shotgun case, camouflage shotgun case, brass hooks, wooden chest, camouflage hats, outdoor equipment
Mr & Mrs I.H. Pirani	Pedigree angora goat
Diane Pritt	Ohakune vegetables, photography, waterfowl publications
Rod & Rifle Magazine	Sets Rod & Rifle magazine
Reloaders Supplies	Publications — hunting dogs, Swandri
Tisdalls, Auckland	Swiss army knife
Wellington Sporting Arms Co	Shotgun, powder flask
World Wildlife Fund — NZ	Framed copy "Kakapo and Chick"
Anonymous donors	Citrus, Kiwifruit, Vegetables, art prints, waterfowl publications, outdoor equipment, indoor games, puzzles, linen, electrical equipment

The highest bid in the auction was for an Angelo Zoli over and under shotgun which reached \$550. The shotgun was kindly donated by Wellington Sporting Arms Company Ltd of Petone.



Paul Pirani receiving the \$2,000 cheque from Murray Dench of the Hamilton Chapter — with an interesting menu in the background.



Some of the high quality art prints for auction.



Sir William Gilbert addressing the Annual Meeting.

Special Note: Auction and other purchases from Ducks Unlimited (NZ) Inc. Members are unable to submit receipts for conference purchases i.e. auction and sale purchases, as part of their annual return to the Inland Revenue Department. Such sums do not qualify for tax exemption. Donations and subscriptions qualify only. Although purchases at D.U. conferences benefit waterfowl, the member or purchaser has received something tangible for his/her pleasure/use — therefore cannot claim a tax deduction. Please do not submit receipts to the Department other than those for membership subscriptions or donations as these are certain to be rejected. Ducks Unlimited (NZ) Inc. accepts no responsibility, other than to inform members of the current position.

MINUTES OF THE EIGHTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF DUCKS UNLIMITED (N.Z.) INCORPORATED HELD AT T.H.C. TOKAANU ON SATURDAY 10 JULY 1982 AT 2 PM

WELCOME

The President extended a welcome to members and friends and in particular Sir William Gilbert, President of the World Wildlife Fund — New Zealand; Mr W. Bryce Johnson, Chief Executive of the New Zealand Acclimatisation Society and Dr Murray Williams of the New Zealand Wildlife Service, all of whom would address the meeting.

PRESENT

The President (Mr P.B.C. Pirani), Vice President (Mr D.G. Bell) and 92 members of Ducks Unlimited (N.Z.) Incorporated. Apologies were received from: Dr I. Shearer, Messrs. R.T. Adams, H. Sinclair, K. Lowry, M. Midgley, K. McKie, R. Martin, J. Nelson-Parker, R. Denny, and Dr. P. Quin. These apologies were sustained on the motion of A. Head/A. Elliott.

MINUTES PREVIOUS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

On the motion of Messrs A. Elliot/A.J. Wilks the Minutes of the Seventh Annual conference held on Saturday, 18 July 1981 at Wellington, having been circulated to all members in "Flight" Issue September 1981, were taken as read and confirmed. There were no matters arising.

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT

The President referred to his remarks published in the 1982 Annual Report and highlighted the serious problems facing resource-based activities in New Zealand, such as farming, forestry and wildlife conservation, commenting that attitudes of the various interests influenced the lives of human and wildlife populations as both were totally dependent on the land. He felt future success for the land developer and the environmentalist lay in land use planning and conflicts between these two areas must be avoided because future generations of both people and wildlife would suffer. The President considered the key to success lay with the education of children and that people must recognise the importance of soil,

water and wildlife conservation in maintaining the present quality of life. Mr Pirani felt that old fashioned qualities of leadership and the ability to motivate were fundamental to the success of any project, in any situation, and he thought D.U. had people with these skills, dedication and, importantly, flexibility. Most of the problems faced by Ducks Unlimited and similar organisations were already apparent, were identified and approaches and the necessary expertise to deal with them were being formulated. However, he concluded his remarks commenting that the penalty for standing back and doing nothing was much heavier than it had ever been in the past.

After commenting on the Balance Sheet and financial accounts, the President moved the adoption of the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 1982. This was seconded by Mr I.H. Pirani.

AUDITORS

It was resolved that the Auditors, Messrs Hutchison Hull & Co., be reappointed for the 1982/83 year (P.B.C. Pirani/W. Avery). The President advised that a new Treasurer had been appointed to replace Mrs L. Bell who was retiring.

ELECTION — BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The President advised that Mr D.G. Bell, Vice President and a founder director had decided to retire and he expressed his personal regrets, detailed Mr Bell's services and contribution to the organisation and recorded the Board's sincere appreciation and thanks.

The President announced that Mr G. Girvan, who had represented members in the past as an elected representative, had been appointed to the Board. Mr Girvan had also accepted the position of Honorary Treasurer.

The President announced that under the Rules, 4 persons could be elected to the Board representing members. Messrs Mark Newcomb, Alan Elliot and Jim Campbell, being eligible, offered themselves for re-election. The President called for nominations.

Mr I.H. Pirani nominated Mr James Glover/seconded Mr A.J. Wilks. No further nominations were received. The President called for a poll and as a result declared Messrs Newcomb, Elliot, Campbell re-elected to the Board and he welcomed Mr J. Glover. The President briefly outlined Mr Glover's background in waterfowl conservation.

RULES

The President stated that a copy of the Rules of Ducks Unlimited (N.Z.) Incorporated was available at the meeting for perusal by any financial member present.

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

The President advised that a signed copy of the Annual Accounts of Ducks Unlimited (N.Z.) Incorporated as at 31 March 1982 was available at the meeting for perusal by any financial member present.

REPORT OF OPERATION PATEKE

Mr F.N. Hayes' opening comments related to the unique status of the Brown Teal project

in that private individuals were directly involved in the attempt to save this endangered species, by breeding birds in their "back gardens". Results for the year were reasonably successful, 13 members having reared a total of 78 Brown Teal and although the figure was below last year, it was nevertheless impressive. Total Brown Teal reared since inception of the project were 290. Mr John Gill had reared 17 and was the recipient of the Brown Teal Breeder of the Year Award — he was also the project supervisor.

Mr Hayes commented on the use of Matakana Island and the Manawatu area, two regions where Brown Teal had been released and detailed the advantages and disadvantages of each site. A disappointment had been the accidental shooting of Brown Teal during the hunting season although publicity concerning the bird in the Manawatu had been substantial. Restrictions on shooting hours were discussed and ideas concerning the removal from the game licence of small waterfowl (for its ultimate protection) were also discussed.

Mr Hayes considered that much thought had to be given to the entire aspect of releasing Brown Teal into the wild and to the design of a release programme to ensure that birds could

Mr Hayes answered questions from members and there was general discussion on matters relating to Brown Teal such as accidental shooting during hunting season, experiences with pinioning, flockmating principles and the donation by Ducks Unlimited of funds toward research.

REPORT ON OPERATION GRETEL

Mr D.G. Bell outlines progress for the year advising that the Grey Teal project had slowed considerably in momentum from previous years when hundreds of nest boxes had been placed in the field. Forty boxes were placed out in the year under review. He commented in detail on progress experienced in the Wairarapa, at Pokeno, Dunedin and in the Waikato. Operation Gretel had completed its sixth season with 600 nest boxes erected around New Zealand and it was estimated that 5,000 eggs had been laid since 1976. Production figures of this nature were a major factor in the increased Grey Teal population said Mr Bell.

Further nest box construction was planned in the coming year and Mr Bell considered 1982/83 would see an extra effort made, particularly in the Waikato where new box work,

numbers and the various hazards of aviculture were highlighted when numbers were low (this had been the case with early efforts in the Brown Teal rearing programme). Mr McNeil commented that the success of Messrs Pirani and B. Rowe in breeding Blue Duck demonstrated how valuable well-bonded breeding captive birds were and how tragic it was when one of a pair, especially a female, died. The wild caught birds from 1981 had adapted well to a diet of commercial pellets, but there had been unfortunate deaths and Mr McNeil stressed that no effort must be spared to protect the birds from predators. They seemed particularly vulnerable to stoats and ferrets, the same as in the wild situation he said. The Wildlife Service had obtained three birds from the Motu area in February 1982 and these were capably cared for by Mr and Mrs Pirani. One failed to adapt and died, and the others — a fine bonded pair, had been transferred to Mt Bruce to augment numbers there.

Mr McNeil said the report did not give him much pleasure and he felt that for Operation Whio to "get off the ground" there must be a larger number of birds to work with and efforts must be directed to persuading the Wildlife Service to let Ducks Unlimited have more Blue Duck. He felt that if Ducks Unlimited could be given permission to take, or was given eggs to build up numbers, this would help materially. The status of this unique bird in the wild was by no means secure said Mr McNeil and he was certain the opportunity to learn the expertise required to breed-up numbers for future release in new or former habitat would be of great benefit — otherwise New Zealand may have another Black Robin, Kakapo or Kokako situation on its hands.

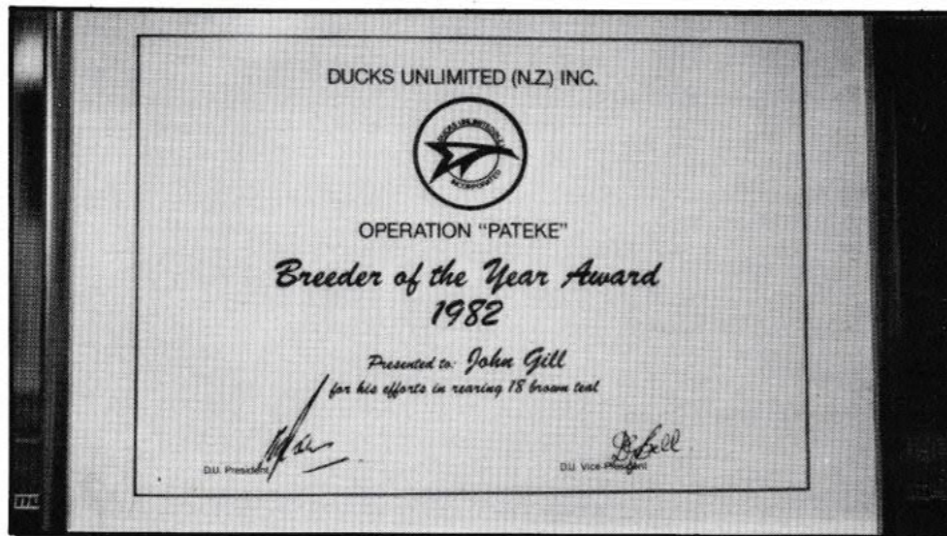
Mr McNeil expressed thanks to the Wildlife Service for its help, enthusiasm and concern and praised the outstanding personnel who had assisted with the programme. Special thanks were given to Mr and Mrs I.H. Pirani for the care and observation of birds placed under their control which had adapted to captivity in their skilled hands.

Questions followed on the selection of mates for Blue Duck; the necessity to build up a nucleus flock of captive birds was also discussed. Dr Murray Williams of the Wildlife Service felt Mr McNeil was being unduly pessimistic — he considered Ducks Unlimited was in the early stages of the project and great strides were being made. Very little was known about the Blue Duck in captivity and efforts must continue. Dr Williams thought Ducks Unlimited may be "hung up" a little on successes with the Brown Teal where flockmating had been very successful. He felt Blue Duck were not a flockmating species and they mated on a "one to one" basis. He agreed a nucleus of birds was essential and that Ducks Unlimited should not be pessimistic at this early stage and should not expect too much too soon.

Discussion followed between the Chair and floor on Blue Duck generally, and the difficulties involved with captive rearing were discussed with Mr I.H. Pirani contributing details of recent experiences with the species. A question was raised concerning a census of Blue Duck in the wild and was answered by Dr Williams who stated that the numerical status was unknown. Recent case studies in the North Island had shown the Blue Duck to be a long lived, low productivity species but much further study was required before positive statements could be made about them.

REPORT ON OPERATION WHIO

Mr D. McNeil considered that the twelve months had not been very satisfactory as, apart from birds held by Mr and Mrs I.H. Pirani, none of the captive birds had bred. Operation Whio was suffering from low breeding stock



Breeder of the Year 'Diploma' awarded to J. Gill who has reared 46 Brown Teal in the last two seasons.

survive and breed. He detailed efforts of the Wildfowl Trust in the United Kingdom who continued to produce Brown Teal in encouraging numbers and had distributed pairs to their five main centres.

Details regarding publicity undertaken during the year were described; talks had been given to interested conservation groups, advertising was undertaken in magazines and Mr Hayes advised the Wildfowl Trust was publishing a paper on Brown Teal in its Scientific Journal.

Mr Hayes commented on the unsuccessful attempts to raise finance for Brown Teal research from public companies. It had been decided, instead, to offer the Wildlife Service a minimum of \$2,000 per annum towards Wildlife Service-controlled research on the species.

In conclusion, Mr Hayes touched briefly on plans for the coming year and he considered the project was proceeding satisfactorily — he expressed thanks to various organisations and individuals for their support and participation.

REPORT ON OPERATION BRANTA

Mr F.N. Hayes reported on the Canada goose programme which had experienced a successful year, 76 geese being transferred from the South Island to farmer members in the Wairarapa in close co-operation with the Wellington Acclimatisation Society. Fifty per cent of the geese were provided by Peacock Springs Wildlife Park and comprised mainly semi-domesticated juveniles which settled down rapidly. The remainder came from the North Canterbury Acclimatisation Society. A big demand for geese in the Wairarapa was evident. During the past season, satisfactory numbers of geese were reared said Mr Hayes, and one member had a flock approaching 100 birds. Mr Hayes commented on the unhappy situation which existed in the South Island high country and among other remarks he felt there was an obvious tourist potential promoting Canada geese populations there. He advised that a promotional film on the species had been prepared by the Wildlife Service.

Various comments were received from members on the South Island situation and both sides of the story were detailed. The President concluded that the matter was a contentious one and there appeared to be no easy solution and although suggestions were made from various quarters, the matter was one which needed to be kept in perspective by all concerned.

At 3.45 pm the meeting adjourned for refreshment.

GUEST SPEAKER: MR W. BRYCE JOHNSON

The Chairman outlined Mr Johnson's role as chief executive of the New Zealand Acclimatisation Society before introducing him to the meeting.

In his opening remarks Mr Johnson mentioned the fields he proposed to cover, namely, an outline of the history of the Society movement, a review of the present structure, comment on current activities and his view of the future.

Mr Johnson said that in the early days, the Society's role was to establish species for game population purposes; however there had been a subtle change since then to habitat conservation and management. He considered the Society was evolving to meet requirements of pressures which were being placed upon it as an organisation.

He drew attention to three important factors which should be acknowledged. First, the Society was a statutory body and therefore government was obliged to listen to it. Twenty four districts comprised the Society, of which twenty two were administered by the organisation and two by the Department of Internal Affairs. The Society movement was a resource management agency and not a user group. It had an internal decisionmaking process which involved users having a voice in the resource. One frustrating aspect was that licence holders could become members of the Council i.e. the Society was led from the bottom. While this had fundamental strengths, Mr Johnson pointed out the obvious disadvantages. The Society was independently funded, solely from fishing and hunting licences and yet it was a statutory body — this was unique in New

Zealand commented Mr Johnson. The group was an anomaly in New Zealand and efforts were currently being made in certain quarters to restructure it and these moves were being strongly resisted by the Society.

Mr Johnson advised that the Society's current efforts were directed toward ensuring the organisation survived investigations which were being conducted into its activities and future. He mentioned briefly the proposed forestry commission and the proposed merger with the Department of Lands & Survey and his view that this had major implications for the Society. He commented on his role as the first national officer; how he wished to firm up the internal structure to strengthen it where there had been past weaknesses, and his emphasis on staffing and staff ability. Mr Johnson said a significant development in the last few years had been the Society's realisation of the limitations of its decisionmakers — the layman had a voice in fish and wildlife management and this had with it the inherent risk of being the greatest risk of all. Moves were in hand to raise the level of competency and ability of councillors through training and this was of vital importance to the Society as it was in a competing situation with other interests involved in saving finite resources. He expressed his confidence in the ability of the field staff — this provided measured continuity and it was necessary to involve them in the decision making process.

Mr Johnson commented on the society's successful stance in the recent amendment to the Wild and Scenic Rivers legislation and the reaction this had drawn from the government. He felt strongly it was a significant piece of legislation and could be used to protect wetlands.

Another current activity was the consolidation of the Society's internal structure. His appointment two years ago was the beginning of a national executive said Mr Johnson. The organisation had always been strong regionally but weak at a national level. The national executive formed an "umbrella" to carry issues at a national level.

Concerning the future, Mr Johnson saw two principal areas — identification of real issues facing fish and wildlife conservation, and the need to establish an effective structure internally to do something about such issues. Conservation produced suitable living space for wildlife and Mr Johnson felt conflict of land use was the problem to be worked upon. To do this the organisation had to put a major effort into public relations and conservation education. There were only so many habitats and these had to be protected. Mr Johnson considered more attention should be paid to habitats which already existed and those which had been lost. Public relations and education must be capitalised in the future and there were two target groups — the converted (Ducks Unlimited and other similar organisations) and the unconverted said Mr Johnson. It was to the latter group the Society must direct its energies. Hard-core advertising was a solution and Mr Johnson considered swamps, rivers etc should be advertised in the same way as household and other products in the media.

On the other objective for the Society was for its members to infiltrate decisionmaking bodies which had responsibility for or made decisions affecting New Zealand resources. Motivated persons must be encouraged for election to regional water boards, farmer representative groups, county councils, because even if these groups did not have wildlife policies to pursue,

DECOYING DUCKS

their action and other attitudes had an impact on wildlife in New Zealand.

Mr Johnson considered Ducks Unlimited had a role to play as a specialist interest group and he admired its enthusiasm. He lightheartedly suggested a change of name — to cover geese and other waterfowl species and on a more serious note commented that D.U. was, unfortunately, identified with the hunting fraternity. He thought it should project more its image as a conservation minded organisation as the other "label" could be an inhibiting factor (quite apart from the fact that it was incorrect).

Mr Johnson concluded his stimulating address by some predictions as to where the Society might be headed 50 years from the present. He felt the country was headed for a final debate on resources, illustrated by the fact that there was less than 50 per cent of rivers compared with the time when the Society was first established. It was necessary to work energetically and ardently to convey to the general public that the resources involved were finite. Mr Johnson considered that politicians did not want to acknowledge this situation and therefore the Society would have to keep on stating the facts; in this connection he wondered whether the present organisation would be permitted to exist in view of its stance. He felt the Society could not help but become involved in major conflict with politicians in pursuit of its present policies. He acknowledged that politics were important and it may be necessary in future to make one or two unhappy compromises. The policies of land use which affected all parties were inseparable and the Society's future was to be political. There could not be unlimited growth of finite resources and everyone was "scrambling" to hold on to what was left. In response to a question as to how much commercialism might be appearing in the

Society movement, Mr Johnson replied that tourism appeared to be one solution. He considered it may be necessary for New Zealand to "prostitute" its resources a little, for other people to use, but in this way some form of protection would be achieved and therein lay the key to survival of the resources.

The President thanked Mr Johnson for his thought-provoking address and the audience showed its appreciation by acclamation.

GUEST SPEAKER: SIR WILLIAM GILBERT

The President extended a warm welcome to Sir William and Lady Gilbert. Sir William outlined the history of the World Wildlife Fund in New Zealand commenting that it raised funds for worthwhile scientific based conservation projects, and was well on the way to achieving constructive work in the field. He reported the achievement of the previous year's target of \$30,000 to fund a hut for Wildlife Service volunteers and others at the Kakapo study site on Stewart Island.

Sir William commented on the valuable contribution from members and interested friends and supporters and on the efforts of local artist, Merylyn Jacquerry in the WWF's fundraising activities and advised further bird studies would be available in poster form in the near future.

A new project undertaken by the World Wildlife Fund — NZ, conducted together with the Hauraki Gulf Maritime Park Board, would begin in early 1983 and Sir William described activities to fund this programme which included the sale of an interesting new book on Birds of New Zealand painted by George Edward Lodge, an important British wildlife painter in the first half of the century. Ducks Unlimited

was assisting with the promotion of the publication and would participate in commission from sales said Sir William. Sir William gave details of the new project which involved afforestation of an island under the Park Board's control and the eventual introduction of a number of rare birds where once indigenous forestry had been re-established.

Sir William concluded his comments with the presentation of a handsome framed copy of the print "Kakapo and Chick" which would be auctioned later in the evening. The President expressed thanks to Sir William for his interesting comments and generosity and members showed their appreciation.

GUEST SPEAKER: DR MURRAY WILLIAMS

Dr Williams presented an address on his recent visit to the Auckland Islands, the purpose of which was to study the Auckland Island Teal. Among other comments of interest concerning the species, Dr Williams mentioned that the Teal was flightless, i.e. incapable of true flight, and the wing structure reduced. Only one other species of waterfowl in the world displayed these characteristics, in South America.

Dr Williams' address was based around an extensive slide presentation covering his visit to the Auckland Islands and he touched on several matters including other species which inhabited the islands; its geography and history. The President expressed members' appreciation at the conclusion of Dr Williams' comments.

GENERAL BUSINESS

The President answered several questions from members on various matters and the meeting concluded at 5.55 pm.

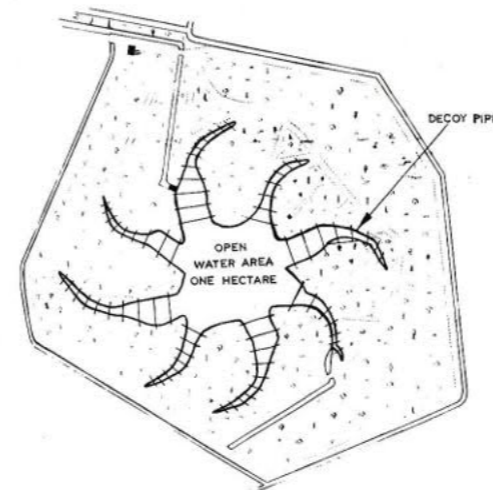
The following article outlines the procedures used in Europe to capture waterfowl. We have never heard of this method being used in New Zealand, but it is a capture technique which has proved very successful for many centuries. We are indebted to the publishers of the book "Ducks of Britain and Europe" by N.A. Ogilvie (of the Wildfowl Trust), Messrs T & A.D. Poyser of Berkhamstead, U.K. for permission to publish this article, which is an extract from their very excellent book. We are also indebted to Dr M.J. Taylor for sending us the article.

Several hundred years ago the duck decoy was evolved in the Netherlands. This ingenious method of catching large numbers of ducks for food requires a quiet, secluded pond of about one hectare (two acres), usually placed in the middle of a small wood. Leading away from the pond are a number of curved arms of water. Each arm might be four of five metres across at the mouth, decreasing in size as it curves away from the pond, narrowing to less than a metre, when twenty of thirty metres away. These arms are covered by netting carried on wooden (or metal) hoops. At the end of each pipe, as it is called, a detachable keep net is placed. Ducks are attracted on to the pond by means of tame decoys and baiting. Once on the pond they are enticed up the pipes by a variety of means. Some food is placed on the banks of the pipes and the ducks learn to feed there. Sometimes the tame ducks are trained to feed in the pipes, hopefully bringing wild ones in with them. Areas are kept clear on the banks of the pipes to act as 'loafing places' where the birds can sit and roost. Finally a dog may be trained to run along the side of the pipe, appearing and disappearing behind vertical reed screens placed by the edge of the water. The ducks on the pond, being inquisitive animals, will swim into the pipe and follow the dog, partly to see what it is, and partly, perhaps, to try to chase it off. Traditionally the dog should look a little like a fox, so perhaps this last theory is correct.



DECOY PIPE ENTRANCE

Whatever means is used to get the ducks into the pipe, the decoyman, when satisfied that enough birds are under the hoops of netting, shows himself at the mouth of the pipe, effectively blocking escape to the pond. Thus trapped, the ducks have no option but to fly or splash up the pipe until it narrows so much that they have to swim the last few yards. Finally they find themselves trapped inside the keep net. The decoyman follows hard on their heels, running along the bank, detaches the net and extracts the ducks. Throughout, the decoyman remains hidden from the pond by the reed screens, so that any ducks that are still on the pond are not frightened by him. All that has happened as far as they are concerned is that some of their number have flown away. Thus, they still consider the pond a safe place and may well return to be caught another day. Skill in operating a duck decoy lies not so much in the flushing of the birds up the pipe, though it is essential to know the correct moment to do this, but the catching of them in such a way that the 'lead' of ducks coming to the pond for food or to roost is not disturbed. By this means successive catches can be made over a period of weeks or months. If the 'lead' is disturbed it may be several days before the birds return.



A plan view of a Duck Decoy pool

Several pipes are necessary in a duck decoy so that the wind can be used to advantage. A catch will go much better if it is made in a pipe that points windwards. When flushed the ducks prefer to take off into wind and so fly up the pipe, not back towards the pond, where they might escape and scare other birds still there. There are usually four or eight arms, occasionally five or six. A four-arm pond has pairs of pipes at each end curving towards each other like the 'mermaid's purse' of the seashore, while an eight pipe decoy has them arranged more like a star-fish, though with bent arms.

This catching technique was so successful that at one time there were several hundred decoys operating in the Netherlands. The design soon spread to England. It was probably brought over by Dutchmen who came to drain the low-lying marshes of East Anglia. Borough Fen Decoy in Northamptonshire, which is now run as a ringing station by the Wildfowl Trust, was probably built between 1630 and 1640. Decoys flourished in England, too, and there were once more than 30 in Essex alone. But gradually they declined, falling into disuse as the price that ducks fetched on the market no longer covered the expense of keeping a decoyman, and the not inconsiderable costs of maintaining the decoy wood and pipes. By the end of the nineteenth century only a small number were still operating and though the First World War brought about a recovery because of higher meat prices, their use declined again thereafter.

Duck catching for the market, or the decoy owner's table, has virtually ceased, but a number of decoys are still in operation in the Netherlands and England, catching ducks for ringing and release. The Wildfowl Trust operates three, and the British Association for Shooting and Conservation has recently restored another though so far catching has been limited. In the Netherlands a number of decoys began ringing soon after the Second World War, and were paid a sum for every duck ringed and released instead of killed.

The commonest duck caught in decoys is the Mallard, but lesser numbers of Teal, Pintail and Wigeon are also caught. In good season, over 2,000 birds will be ringed. A season starts at the end of the summer, usually 1st August, when the ducks begin to gather on the decoy pool, and carries on until the end of March. But the records show that some decoys in the past have easily exceeded present day levels. Most of the English decoys were owned by large estates and full details of catches and sales were kept. An examination of the catches at Nacton Decoy, Suffolk, showed that in the fifty winters from 1919 to 1968, no less than 195,000 ducks were caught. About one third each were Mallard and Teal, with slightly fewer Wigeon, and smaller numbers of Pintail. This gives an average of 3,900 a season, with the best year topping 9,000.

the duckshooter's bag

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PATEKE

For the benefit of new members (and some older ones) a few notes about operation Pateke might be of interest: (Pateke is the Maori name for the Brown Teal).

- The New Zealand Brown Teal is the rarest species of waterfowl in New Zealand.
- In the early 1900's the Brown Teal was widespread throughout New Zealand, but since then its numbers have been drastically reduced to approximately 1,000 birds, which are confined to two areas — North Auckland and Great Barrier Island.
- The species is endemic and is not found elsewhere in the world.
- Ducks Unlimited's operation 'Pateke' aims to reverse the decline of Brown Teal by breeding birds in captivity and releasing them into suitable wild areas.
- Operation 'Pateke' completed its sixth season this year and since the project started 290 Brown Teal have been reared in captivity by Ducks Unlimited members.
- Ducks Unlimited believes that operation 'Pateke' is the most important and constructive conservation project ever undertaken by a private group.
- The project is carried out in close liaison with the Wildlife Service, which is also very

involved in breeding Brown Teal at the Mt Bruce Native Bird Reserve, and around 50 birds are now being reared annually at the reserve.

- Operation 'Pateke' calls for 50 breeding pairs of Brown Teal to be held in captivity by Ducks Unlimited members. Currently 40 pairs are held by 22 members.
- The initial breeding stock of just over 20 birds came from Great Barrier Island and were supplied by the Wildlife Service.
- Since 1976 over 350 captive reared Brown Teal have been released into the wild and breeding of these birds in the wild has been confirmed.
- During the early breeding seasons a considerable amount of knowledge and experience has been gained, and put into practice. This has resulted in 178 Brown Teal being reared by Ducks Unlimited members over the past two breeding seasons.
- Ducks Unlimited is confident that in the short term it can maintain the numbers of Brown Teal in the wild at a stable level, and in the long term can increase the population to a level where the species is no longer endangered.

Brown Teal Flock Mating Neil Hayes has again been holding birds for flock mating and reports that after a slow start pairing is now going well and he expects all members waiting for pairs to receive them in time to settle down and breed this season. (For new D.U. members — flock mating is the technique used to allow Brown Teal to select their own mate. After each breeding season ten male birds and ten females are retained in one aviary and are left to sort themselves out into pairs. This technique has been the key to the rapid expansion of our captive breeding programme.)

Breeding season We have several new members joining the project this season. One new Pateke member is Ron Munro, a farmer in Invercargill. Ron has built a fine aviary to our Brown Teal management specifications — for three pairs of Teal. This is just the right sort of input to really give the project a big boost. It is also nice to have more people on the 'mainland' involved in the project.

Release sites What D.U. will do about the release of Brown Teal this coming season has yet to be decided. With Matakana Island being written off and several birds being shot at Puke Puke Lagoon, thoughts are turning towards the release of Teal in Northland. Areas of Northland still hold around 500 Brown Teal and the Wildlife Service has been doing some excellent work in the preservation and development of suitable Brown Teal habitat, but the Brown Teal in Northland are still on the decline and the best move might well be to release our birds in suitable Northland habitat and attempt to at least maintain a stable population. But at this stage things are very much up in the air.

GRETEL

Waikato The Hamilton Chapter has now taken over the Gretel project in the Waikato and will be responsible for the erection, inspection and maintenance of boxes. Nesting is now well underway and good numbers of eggs are being reported.

Wairarapa All boxes in the Wairarapa have been inspected and new nesting material added where necessary. At Barton's Lagoon in late July a record number of Grey Teal were seen when around 250 lifted off during a maintenance inspection. One box at Barton's has been taken over by bees, so we may get into the honey business as well as the egg business!

Dunedin Horry Sinclair reports that his 50 boxes are all set for the season and around 15,000 Grey Teal have been present for some time. You will recall that two of Horry's boxes were used for the first time last season, so hopes are high for increased usage this season.

Christchurch Peter McLeod reports that one box at Woodend has been destroyed by cows invading the lagoon. The remaining 19 boxes are, however, in good condition. No breeding of Grey Teal has ever been recorded at Woodend so for the second season since the erection of the boxes we will be watching activity at Woodend with keen interest.

'Gretel's' future After a quiet period where D.U. Directors have been pondering the future of Gretel it has now been decided that D.U. should maintain and expand its interest in the project. The Grey Teal population is growing at a rapid rate and we see artificial nest sites as being essential to a healthy population. An effort is also being made to encourage more acclimatisation societies to take an active interest in the propagation of Grey Teal.

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