

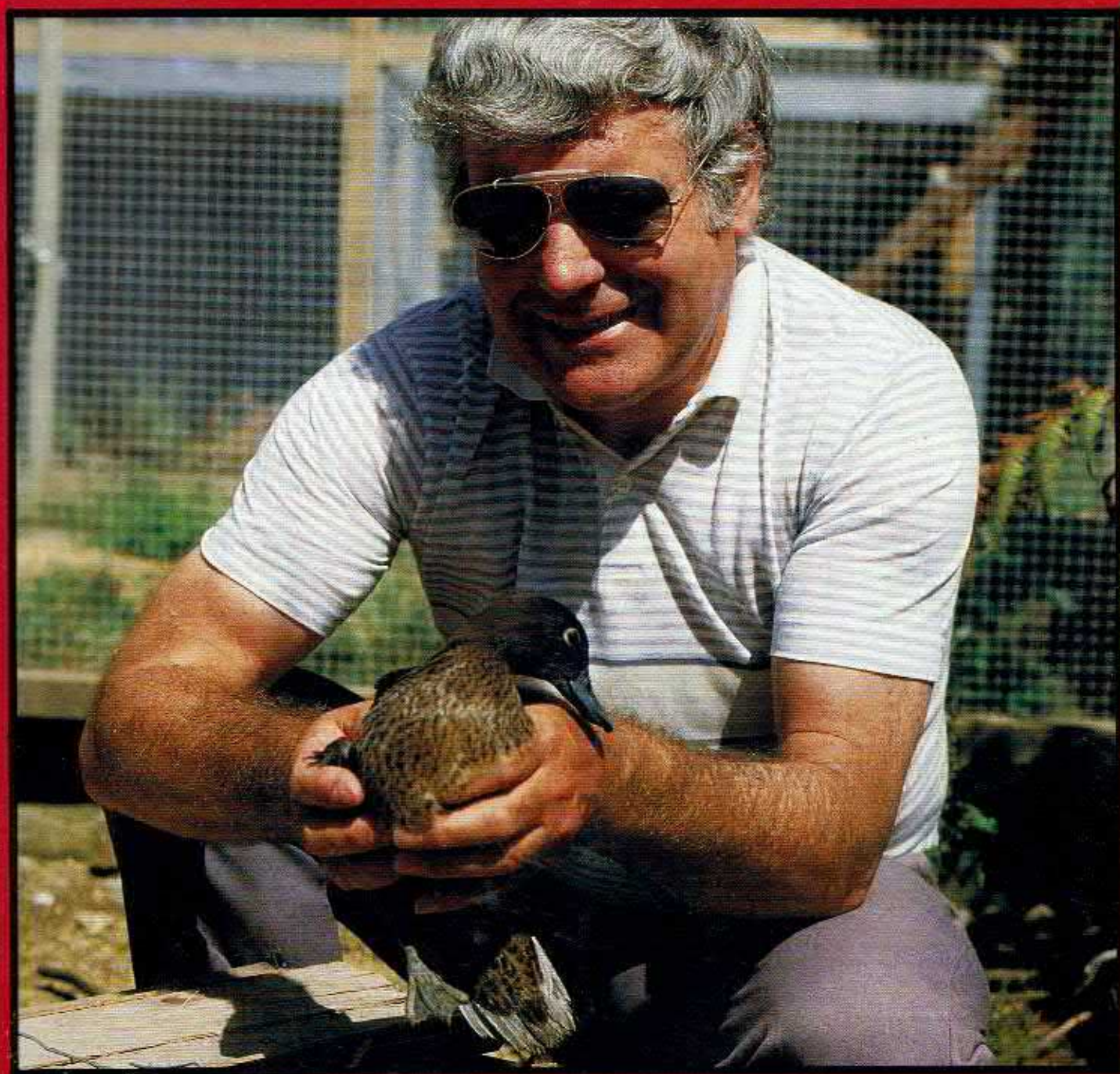
No. 2/88 • ISSUE 56 • JUNE, 1988

NEW ZEALAND REGISTERED MAGAZINE

DUCKS UNLIMITED  
QUARTERLY  
WATERFOWL JOURNAL



# Flight



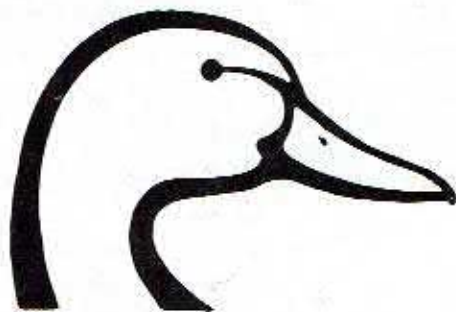


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— FOR WATERFOWL AND WETLANDS —  
PO BOX 44-176 LOWER HUTT, NEW ZEALAND



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— FOR WATERFOWL AND WETLANDS —

## PO BOX 44-176 LOWER HUTT, NEW ZEALAND

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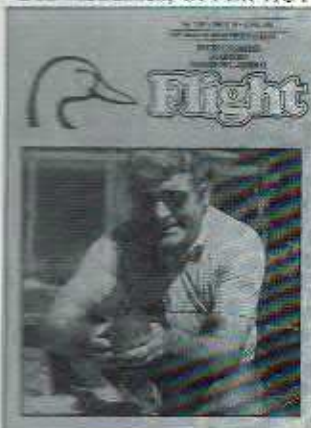
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Cover photo: Neil Hayes releases a Brown Teal into Jim Campbell's aviary.  
Photo Gary Girvan

Ducks Unlimited (NZ) Incorporated is a private, non-profit membership organisation dedicated to the preservation, restoration, creation 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 44176, Lower Hutt. "Flight" is the official quarterly publication of Ducks Unlimited (NZ) Incorporated reached 2000 members and friends concerned with waterfowl conservation. DU memberships begin at \$11.00 pa for Junior to \$27.50 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. Letter 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 (NZ) Incorporated.



# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Jim Campbell

Since the last issue of FLIGHT there have been several developments that I would like to tell you about. Firstly there was the blue duck seminar held at the National Wildlife Centre at Mount Bruce. This seminar was well represented by Department of Conservation staff and other interested parties, including Ducks Unlimited. The results of the seminar are exciting and include a recovery programme for the blue duck that will feature a captive breeding programme involving Ducks Unlimited. With the attention being focussed on this declining species, its future looks bright.

The Government has also announced its decision with regard to the Quango Review and in particular fish and game. Acclimatisation Societies are to have a name change, be reduced in number and operate under a management plan. They are also to regain control over the Central North Island and Southern Lakes districts. I would like to take this opportunity of congratulating the society movement on their success over the debate and Ducks Unlimited look forward to a long and harmonious relationship with them.

The importance of the fight to save wetlands and endangered waterfowl should transcend any acrimony that arose during the submission stage of the Quango Review.

The membership return rate has been very good with five new life members and up to twenty sponsor members featuring among the many hundreds of renewals so far.

I am leaving for Canada to attend Ducks Unlimited functions shortly and to learn more about the way that our Northern Hemisphere partners operate. Ducks Unlimited in America and Canada are growing rapidly with 600,000 members and a fundraising total of \$60 million in the US, and Canada having 75,000 members and a fund raising total of \$5.2 million.



President, Jim Campbell, on the mark at the Wellington Chapter's Simulated Field claybird shoot. DU member, Terry McDonald referees.

This year's A.G.M. will be our major event with many exciting auction items, a golf tournament (see the advertisement this

issue) and a visit to the Broadlands Wildfowl Trust which should not be missed. See you there.

## THE DUCKS UNLIMITED 18 HOLE GOLF TOURNAMENT

to be held at the **THC WAIRAKEI GOLF COURSE SAT. JULY 16, '88**

The format will be a straight stableford competition with ladies to play on their full handicap and off the ladies tees.

While non-club golfers are welcome to play, only those with an official club handicap authorized by their club secretary will be eligible for the championship title.

The entry fee is \$40 which covers green fees and the prize list.

Prizes will be presented at the dinner to be held at the THC Wairakei Hotel.

TEE OFF 9.30 AM

Club, trolley and buggy hire can be arranged if any entrant so wishes. Club sharing is not permitted.

THE DUCKS UNLIMITED 18 HOLE GOLF TOURNAMENT  
SATURDAY JULY 16 1988 TEE OFF 9.30 A.M.

Name and Address .....

CLUB .....

Handicap (include Secretarial endorsement) .....

ENTRY FEE ENCLOSED \$40.

RETURN TO T.A. Caithness

32 Mawson Street, Lower Hutt



# 14th ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF DUCKS UNLIMITED (NZ) — THC WAIRAKEI 16th & 17th JULY 1988

**M**embers, we again need your vital support to ensure that this year's conference raises more money than ever before and attendance sets a new record. Come and participate in DU's major fund raising and social event of the year.

The past year has seen DU and its members create numerous wetlands up and down the country. But there is much work to be done, and very little can be achieved without a good income. To date each wetland that has been created, or restored, by DU has resulted in further enquiries from

farmers who have heard about our activities. It would certainly be great to have all the money readily available so that we could make real progress in our efforts to replace a much larger percentage of the 90% of wetlands lost this century through drainage.

This coming year sees further expansion of DU activities and we need your support to ensure that DU remains No. 1 in waterfowl and wetlands.

Diane Pritt, Smiths Road, Ohakune, is co-ordinating registrations for the annual conference and if you haven't already

booked in with her please do so pronto — phone Ohakune 58016 (Std 0658). There will be a slight increase in this year's registration fee and the cost will be \$40/head. For the 'social event of the year' this is a relatively modest cost and registration includes the superb THC smorgasbord dinner, plus coffee and biscuits on Sunday morning.

DU Sales section will be open all weekend and on Sunday morning we will have a number of Trade displays.

The programme for the Annual Conference is as follows:

## FRIDAY 15th JULY & SATURDAY 16th JULY 1988

The 5th DU (NZ) National Clay Target Championships are to be held at the Taupo Gun Club, commencing at 9.00am on Friday & 9.30am on Sunday. The full programme of events is shown elsewhere in this issue.

### SATURDAY 16th JULY

9.30am Field trip to Dave Johnson's farm, Allen Road, Broadlands, near Reporoa, to view the extensive wetland creation work being carried out — and the large numbers of waterfowl.

### ANNUAL CONFERENCE

#### — SATURDAY 16th JULY AT THE THC WAIRAKEI

Commencing at 1.30pm

1. 1.30pm Registration — \$40/head
2. 2.00pm Welcome & Apologies
3. 2.05pm Minutes of the 1987 AGM and Matters Arising
4. 2.10pm President's Report & Presentation of the Financial Report for 1987-88
5. 2.20pm Appointment of Auditors for 1988-89
6. 2.25pm Election of four (4) Directors from the floor of the meeting.
7. 2.30pm Report on operation 'PATEKE' (Neil Hayes)

8. 2.35pm Report from Dr Grant Dumbell on Brown Teal research in Northland
9. 2.50pm Presentation of the Brown Teal Breeder of the year Award
10. 3.00pm Guest Speaker
11. 3.45pm Break for President's 'SHOUT'
12. 4.00pm The President will provide a few details about his attendance at DU Canada's 50th Anniversary celebrations
13. 4.10pm Presentation of the Bill Barrett Trophy
14. 4.15pm Sinclair Wetlands Manager's report (Horrie Sinclair)
15. 4.25pm Report on operation "WETLANDS" (Brendan Coe)
16. 4.30pm Report on operation 'WHIO' (Neil Hayes)
17. 4.35pm Report on operation 'ROYAL SWAN' (Jim Glover)
18. 4.40pm EDITORIAL Report (Gary Girvan)
19. 4.45pm General business followed by refreshments
20. 7.00pm Annual Dinner
21. 8.15pm Annual Auction
22. 9.30pm Refreshments and socialising

### SUNDAY 17th JULY

9.30am Coffee and biscuits and a couple of hours of viewing Trade displays.

## DON'T MISS YOUR COPY OF **ROD & RIFLE**

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NZ's Premier Sporting Publication.

- UPLAND GAME BIRD HUNTING • SEAFISHING
- BIG GAME HUNTING • TROUT ANGLING





# D.U. NEWS

## DU PATRON APPOINTED

DU Directors are pleased to announce that Lady Diana Isaac of Christchurch has accepted appointment as PATRON of Ducks Unlimited (NZ).

The Isaac family have been associated with DU for many years and their support for Ducks Unlimited's aims and objectives is open for the main reasons for DU's success in all projects. We are indeed honoured to have Lady Diana as our Patron.

## NEW HONORARY MEMBER

At its March meeting DU Directors decided to confer Honorary Membership on Stephen Loach of Dunedin. Stephen was the architect for the Sinclair Wetlands Educational Centre and he designed and supervised the building construction entirely voluntarily. (Normal costs for architect fees for such an impressive structure would be in the vicinity of \$30,000).

## NEW LIFE MEMBERS

DU is also pleased to announce four new LIFE members — Chris Hooson of Hooson Industries and DU Treasurer for the past two years, Alan Feilding of Palmerston North, Leigh McKinnon of Pahiatua, Otamire Trust of Hunterville, and S. Hughes of Dunedin. Such outstanding support certainly gives DU Directors great confidence for the future of the organisation.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS & MEMBERSHIP

Membership Secretary, Brendan Coe, tells us that sub renewals have been pouring in and that the rise in subscription rates has not affected members' support for DU's work. In fact DU is receiving overwhelming support for Sponsor Membership (\$55). The Full membership rate is still by far the lowest of any conservation group in New Zealand.

Membership continues to rise at an impressive rate, thanks largely to an impressive array of recent publicity — particularly on the opening day of the duck season in the NZ Herald, when feature writer Colin Moore provided a comprehensive overview of DU projects and about hunters' involvement in conservation.

## TRADE MEMBER

King Country Drilling contractors of Te Kuiti, were the first Trade members to renew their trade sub for 1988-89.

## PROMINENT PEOPLE TO VISIT NZ

If everything goes to plan a sizeable contingent of DU people from overseas will visit NZ during September. The visitors will include the Presidents of DU Canada, DU USA, and DU Mexico, together with the Executive Vice Presidents from the three groups, plus wives.

The group will inspect a number of DU



*The Sinclair Wetlands Educational Centre has got a lot of windows. Horrie, here hard at work, is open to any offers of help for this chore. Photo: Ted Hanson*

projects and a one day seminar on Protecting the World's Wetlands will be held at the Sinclair Wetlands Educational Centre.

DU (NZ) will be doing everything possible to ensure that the group enjoys its stay in NZ. As we have said so often before, the support received from the overseas sections of DU has been absolutely invaluable to our progress. (See item in this column about the Beretta shotgun). On the world scene, the combined memberships of the four groups means that Ducks Unlimited is by far the largest conservation group in the world — with around 1 million members and increasing rapidly.

## FURTHER OUTSTANDING SUPPORT FROM THE QEII NATIONAL TRUST

Under its conservation subsidy scheme the QEII National Trust has made another \$25,000 contribution to the Sinclair Wetlands environmental development programme, bringing the Trust's contribution to \$50,000.

At a recent meeting of the Sinclair Wetlands Management Committee (on which the National Trust has equal representation) the Management Plan for the wetlands was finalised, and is being printed at the time of writing. The Management Plan is certainly the most comprehensive plan of its kind ever seen in NZ and draft copies have already been used by university students to assist their wildlife management studies. Copies are expected to be available at \$20 per copy — further details from the DU Secretary. The National Trust, being well experienced in the preparation of Management Plans, has been the major contributor in the production of the Sinclair

Wetlands Management Plan, at no small cost to the Trust; so that when this work is added to the \$50,000 the Trust's input is outstanding — and the main reason why the work at the wetlands has made such rapid progress.

If you would like to know more about the work of the QEII National Trust write to the Trust at PO. Box 3341, Wellington. The Trust has a variety of membership categories available and publishes a quarterly journal.

## WORK AT THE SINCLAIR WETLANDS

With the Educational Centre almost complete, apart from landscaping work around the building, completing the bunks in the visitor's accommodation and finishing the carpark, thoughts are now turning towards all the other work that needs to be done in order to create NZ's major environmental attraction — and fulfill the aims of the whole exercise, which is to educate the Public to a wider (and greater) appreciation of Waterfowl & Wetlands. The following stages have therefore been drawn up in order to meet the objectives, and these will be completed as funds become available:

- Stage 1. CONSTRUCTION OF THE EDUCATIONAL CENTRE**  
Construction is also complete — at a cost of \$275,000
- Stage 2. CONSTRUCTION OF PONDS FOR CAPTIVE WATERFOWL**  
This work will include:
  - (a) Construction of a series of large ponds, in front of the Educational Centre, and built to a designed shape and size.





**Foreground: The Sinclair Wetlands, 800 acres of prime waterfowl habitat and home to thousands of birds of 68 different species.** Photo: Neil Hayes

## DUCKS UNLIMITED (N.Z.) INC

P.O. BOX 44-176, LOWER HUTT

**1988 ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

**THC WAIRAKEI**

**Saturday & Sunday**

**July 16th & 17 1988**

**Plus the NATIONAL CLAY BIRD CHAMPIONSHIPS**

**JULY 15th, 1988**

**At the TAUPO GUN CLUB**

A \$30 registration fee is required and must be included with this form.

I/WE WILL BE ATTENDING THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

I/WE WILL REQUIRE ACCOMMODATION FOR ..... NIGHTS ON .....  
(DATES)

NUMBER ATTENDING .....

NUMBER OF ROOMS REQUIRED .....

NAME/S .....

ADDRESS .....

Or charge to my  
VISA/BANKCARD/DINERS/AMEX  
(Delete to suit)

CARD No. .... EXPIRY DATE .....

SIGNATURE .....

REGISTRATION FEE OF \$30 IS ENCLOSED  
POST TO:  
DIANE PRITT, SMITHS ROAD,  
OHAKUNE

- (b) Landscaping of ponds – with public walkways through, and over, the ponds.
- (c) Total fencing of the ponds – to keep waterfowl in and predators out.
- (d) Construction of a holding aviary, in which to keep the waterfowl secure in the event of flooding.

**Stage 3. CONSTRUCTION OF A WALKWAY TO LONELY ISLAND**

**Stage 4. CONSTRUCTION OF A HIDE ON LONELY ISLAND**  
This hide will overlook Goodies Lagoon – one of the largest in the wetlands and well frequented by large numbers of waterfowl.

**Stage 5. CONSTRUCTION OF WALKWAY FROM LONELY ISLAND TO RAM ISLAND**  
One hide will overlook Ram Island Lagoon and the other Boundary Lagoon, two lagoons which regularly support 20,000 birds – of over 60 species.

Various avenues of funding are currently being explored, but if you have any spare cash you would like to invest in waterfowl and wetlands – far more rewarding than the present stock market – it will most certainly be gratefully received.

### DOCTORATE AWARDED

After four years of research work on the Brown Teal, Grant Dumbell was awarded a Doctorate of Philosophy by the University of Auckland – on the 6th May. Grant's voluminous thesis on Brown Teal covers every aspect of the species' biology and we hope to have a copy of the thesis available for loan to members. During his four years of research Grant has also produced a number of scientific papers on brown teal and these have been published in eminent scientific journals. Presently studying the Northland Brown Teal population, it has become apparent that Grant's work on brown teal is invaluable in the brown teal recovery programme.

Ducks Unlimited congratulates Doctor Grant Dumbell on his fine contribution towards brown teal conservation and on the award of his Doctorate.

### BLUE DUCKS HATCH IN THE UK

In early April, an excited Rod Hall phoned from the UK to tell us that the Blue ducks at the Wildfowl Trust's centre at Arundel had laid two eggs. In consultation with Martin Bell of the National Wildlife Centre, DU sent Rod information about the incubation of Blue duck eggs, and in early May Rod wrote to DU to let us know that 2 eggs had successfully hatched from 4 eggs. The parent duck sat on the eggs for four weeks and the eggs were then removed and hatched under a bantam. Two eggs were infertile. Mallard eggs were placed under



the Blue duck and Rod says that she was more than happy showing a mallard brood how to frequent the fast flowing water in the aviary.

In late May we heard that one Blue duck duckling had not survived, but the other was doing well. We will be keeping our fingers crossed for the survivor; the rearing of which will be a first for the Wildfowl Trust and will mean the first Blue duck to be reared outside NZ. Naturally enough NZ has received some positive publicity and the hatching closely followed the ANGLIA TV showing of the Survival film "WHITE WATER BLUE DUCKS"

#### COMMEMORATIVE SHOTGUN RECEIVED FROM DU INC

A magnificent commemorative shotgun has been received from DU USA to help DU NZ raise funds for wetland creation. The shotgun is a Beretta Model 303 semi-auto in 20 gauge. The action is inlaid with gold and the wood is finely figured walnut, as shown in the photograph. The gun will be offered for auction at the annual conference. This is the third shotgun sent by DU USA and, as mentioned elsewhere, such support is the main reason for DU NZ's success with waterfowl and wetlands.

#### JANET MARSHALL PAINTING

By late May no satisfactory tender had been received for the scaup painting by Janet Marshall and it seems likely that the painting will be offered at the Annual Auction at THC Wairakei, but you still have until the end of June to submit a tender. See March FLIGHT for details.

#### 1988 NATIONAL RAFFLE

All members will receive a ten ticket book of raffle tickets — \$2 per ticket or \$10 for the book. The first prize is an original waterfowl painting by Janet Marshall — this year it is a pair of NZ's most prominent species of waterfowl — the mallard. Value of this is \$5,000 — not \$2,500 as shown on the tickets.

We do hope that everyone will again support the National Raffle, the proceeds of which go towards DU's wetland creation programme.

The DU Board of Directors takes this opportunity to thank Janet Marshall and her husband Graham for their very significant contribution to DU's aims and objectives.

#### PREDATOR TRAPS

The famous Fenn traps for stoats, rats and hedgehogs, as advertised in the March FLIGHT have been selling very well. A limited number are, however, still available, at \$20 each, inc. postage.

Instructions are sent with each trap, but you will need to make wooden tunnels under which to set the trap. Each tunnel should be around 24" and 9" high. Only three sides are needed as the trap itself will sit on the ground. The three sided tunnel means that you can readily inspect the trap by lifting the tunnel. Tunnels also ensure that only predators are caught in the trap.

Traps should be positioned along the fence that surrounds your waterfowl pond.

#### NZ TO BE WELL REPRESENTED AT DU CANADA'S CELEBRATIONS

Five 'kiwis', including DU President Jim Campbell and DU Director Glenys Hansen,



will attend DU Canada's 50th anniversary celebrations in June. Jim, who also attended the 50th anniversary celebrations of DU USA last year, will provide us with details of his latest ventures at the annual conference.

#### NEW BOOK ON WETLANDS BEING WRITTEN

A new book entitled "A GUIDE TO WETLANDS MANAGEMENT" is currently being written, specifically for catchment authority personnel, local authorities, conservation groups, DOC employees, farmers Landcorp employees, etc.

The Environmental Council nurtured the idea and the Dept of Conservation, Landcorp, the QEII National Trust and Ducks Unlimited (NZ) will all play a major part in financing and overseeing publication of what promises to be an extremely important book.

#### ANIMAL LIBERATION FRONT RAISES ITS UGLY HEAD IN NZ

Just prior to the 1988 NZ duck hunting season the Australian section of the Animal Liberation front circulated all NZ members of Parliament with a document calling for the abolition of duck hunting in NZ. Letters from this group also appeared in a number of major newspapers and also called for the banning of duck hunting.

While DU (NZ) has no policy on duck hunting, it is a fact around 50% of our members are duck hunters and as "The World of Shooting" points out — hunters are the world's leading conservationists and without them many wetlands around the world would have disappeared.

It has also always been one of our main aims to establish good liaison between hunters and pure conservationists, and we feel that we have had some success in this direction. In an effort therefore to clarify the NZ position in the eyes of the public DU wrote to the Editors of the newspapers involved in publishing the animal libers letters, and to keep members in touch our letter is set out below.

"The recently published letter from Australian Animal Liberation McEwan on duck hunting in NZ shows a com-

pletely naive and ill-informed knowledge about recreational hunting.

Ducks Unlimited (NZ) is a largely hunter-financed organisation and hunters' input has gone a long way towards ensuring not only a healthy duck population but also ensuring that many wetland species are thriving — thanks to the habitat creation, restoration and protection work Ducks Unlimited is able to carry out with duck hunters' money.

JOIN

# DUCKS UNLIMITED (NZ) INC

P.O. BOX 44-176  
LOWER HUTT

Life membership	\$550.00
Sponsor membership	\$55.00 year
Full membership	\$16.50 year
Junior membership	\$5.50 year
Trade membership	\$22.00 year

ALL CONTRIBUTIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE

Or write for further details

Name

Address



In North America our associated organisations, Ducks Unlimited Canada and Ducks Unlimited USA, have during their 50 years of existence created and protected over 2½ million hectares of wetland habitat. And with such commitment it is hardly surprising that world wide Ducks Unlimited is now the largest conservation group with over 1 million members.

In NZ duck hunting is practised by over 70,000 people and, in fact, shooting sports have over 500,000 participants. Of course, just about all game species present in NZ were introduced specifically for hunting and they would not be here at all without the massive input from the hunting fraternity.

And, of course, if Mr McEwan and his few supporters had carried out even the most basic research they would have learnt that throughout the world hunters are the leading conservationists.

We strongly recommend that Mr McEwan starts to practise animal conservation in a practical way and that he

refrains from bringing his ill-conceived philosophies into NZ. Surely he should have learnt from his Australian experiences, where the NSW Government went out by the largest majority ever seen in Australia — purely because of their anti-firearm/anti-hunting/anti-life mentality."

#### CONSERVATION QUANGO REVIEW

In late May the Government announced its decision on the review of conservation quangos and plans are underway to eliminate 80 quangos by the end of 1988. In announcing the decision Associated Conservation Minister Fran Wilde said that the quangos will be replaced with a more streamlined and efficient administration system.

One of the few quangos to survive intact is DU's closely associated organisation the QEII National Trust, which has been clearly recognised for its value in preserving open spaces. The 22 acclimatisation societies and the two conservancy councils — the Central North Island Wildlife Conservancy

and the Southern Lakes Conservancy — are to be replaced by up to 12 Regional Councils and one national Council. (At the time of writing the names of these councils had not been announced, but the name is likely to be Fish & Wildlife Councils or Fish & Game Councils). Members of these councils will be elected by licence holders and the National Council will be directly responsible to the Minister for Conservation.

The nuts and bolts of the whole restructuring have still to be sorted out, but we are sure that the majority of those interested in fish and game will welcome the changes.

We believe that the acclimatisation society movement is well pleased with the proposals, which are virtually identical to what DU had suggested in its submission. Some society members did, however, choose to misinterpret DU's submission and saw it as an ideal opportunity to knock our efforts.

But overall DU continues to enjoy an excellent relationship with the majority of societies and we certainly look forward to a close working relationship with the new Fish & Game Councils.

#### RIVER AND LAKE TO BE PROTECTED

Draft National Conservation Orders have been placed on the Manganui-a-te-ao River and on Lake Ellesmere. The two conservation orders were the last ones approved by the National Water & Soil Conservation Authority before the Authority went out of existence. The move will certainly please all conservationists.

The Managanui-a-te-ao carries one of the largest Blue duck populations in the North Island and has unique characteristics, as has Lake Ellesmere, near Christchurch — with its very large waterfowl population and outstanding wildlife habitat values.

Now that NAWASCO has disappeared conservation order applications will be handled by regional water boards.

#### 20TH INTERNATIONAL ORNITHOLOGICAL CONGRESS — 1990

The 20th International Ornithological Congress will take place in Christchurch, New Zealand, on 2-9 December 1990. The Congress programme will include 6 plenary lectures, 48 symposia, contributed papers (spoken and poster), workshops, discussion groups and films. There will be a mid-Congress excursion day. Longer excursions are planned to interesting ornithological sites in New Zealand before and after the Congress. In late 1990 New Zealand will also host the 20th World Conference of the International Council for Bird Preservation in Hamilton on 21-27 November 1990 and a Pacific Festival of Nature Films in Dunedin on 27 November-1 December 1990. Photographic and stamp exhibitions will be held in Christchurch in association with the International Ornithological Congress. Requests for the First Circular, which includes information on the above events, should be sent to:

Dr Ben D. Bell, Secretary-General,  
20th International Ornithological Congress,  
Department of Zoology,  
Victoria University of Wellington,  
Private Bag, Wellington, New Zealand  
(Telex NZ30882 VUWLIB;  
Facsimile NZ (04) 712-070)

## DUCKS UNLIMITED (N.Z.) INC 5th ANNUAL NATIONAL CLAY TARGET CHAMPIONSHIPS

TAUPO GUN CLUB GROUNDS  
FRIDAY 15th July 1988 — 9.00am  
SATURDAY 16th July 1988 — 9.30am

### PROGRAMME

#### Friday 15th July

1. 25 Tgt 1988 DU (NZ) Skeet Championship — Holder: J Woolley
2. 25 Tgt 1988 DU (NZ) Sporting Championship — Holder: J Bennett
3. 10 Pair 1988 DU (NZ) Double Rise Championship — Holder: M Havill
4. 20 Tgt 1988 DU (NZ) Sparrows Championship — Holder: A Hughes
5. 25 Tgt 1988 DU (NZ) Single Barrel Championship — Holder: G McPhee

#### Saturday 16th July

1. 25 Tgt 1988 DU (NZ) Points Score Championship — Holder: J McMillan
2. 25 Tgt 1988 DU (NZ) Single Rise Championship — Holder: J Coatham
3. 15 Tgt 1988 DU 5 man Chapter Teams Champs. — Holders: Waikato
4. 50 Tgt 1988 DU (NZ) International 10 man Team shoot.

All events graded A B & C. Sash & Silver Fern to HOA winners. Grade winners receive medals. Sash also for winning team members and HOA High Gun.

Entry \$10 per championship event, Targets 18c, Sweep \$5. HOA High Gun \$2.

Postal entries accepted.

Accommodation at competitive rates available at Adelphi Motel. Your hosts: Fay and Gordon Clark. ph 87-594.

Annual Ducks Unlimited dinner and auction held at Wairakei Hotel on Saturday evening. See notice re bookings in this issue.

Shoot Organiser: John Coatham R.D.1 PUTARURU ph (0814) 25-779

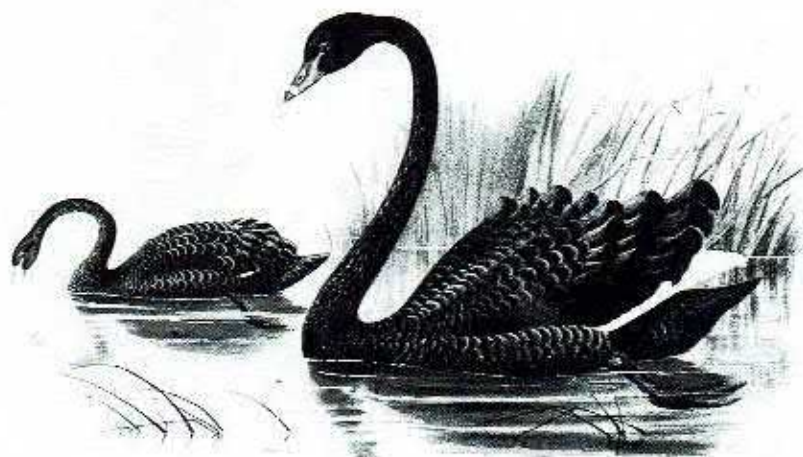


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Foreword by  
Sir Peter Scott CBE DSC  
Founder of the Wildfowl Trust.  
Text by Peter J. S. Olney,  
Curator of Birds at the  
Zoological Society of London,  
and formerly Head of Research  
at the Royal Society for  
the Protection of Birds.



QUEEN VICTORIA SWAN

## THE WILDFOWL PAINTINGS OF HENRY JONES

*The collection of paintings by Henry Jones bequeathed to the Zoological Society represents an extraordinary achievement. As a body of work I find it enormously impressive.*

From the Foreword by Sir Peter Scott



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### The Artist

Henry Jones was born in Kent in 1838 and joined the Army at the age of twenty-two. Most of his service career was spent in India, initially with the 92nd (Wiltshire) Regiment of Foot. He retired with the rank of Honorary Major in 1881. Back in England, he devoted the second half of his life to painting birds, and on his death in 1921 he bequeathed a collection of 1,214 watercolours to the Zoological Society of London. They are among the Society's most treasured possessions.

### The Paintings

Henry Jones completed 252 paintings of wildfowl in adult plumages, including 42 showing eclipse and other plumages. We have carefully selected 60 of the best and the most interesting for publication.

### The Text

The main text by Peter Olney provides basic information on each species' way of life, habitat, and distribution. It also includes much original research on the history of the species' discovery and classification. In addition there is a biography of Henry Jones, a list of all the Anstube that he painted, a bibliography, and an index.



### Format

Each painting will be printed the same size as the original (approximately 100mm x 75mm), on paper specially chosen to match the original. The plates will be individually mounted on cartridge paper pages of contrasting colour and texture. Page size will be a generous 180mm x 243mm (more than A5). The volume will contain a minimum of 262 pages.

### Binding

Leather half-binding with matching cloth. Raised bands on spine. Gold tooling. Six hand and tailbands.

### Publication

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**Claris Airport.** Photo: Neil Hayes

# OPERA

**T**he Island appeared, as it must have done the first time it was discovered, as a low-lying outline of dark green with rugged peaks that fall to rocky points and white sandy beaches, surrounded by the blue waters of the Hauraki Gulf. This was Great Barrier, the largest of the Barrier Islands, named by Captain Cook in 1769 because of the way they lay across the mouth of the Hauraki Gulf and it was the destination of a group of D.U. Directors and supporters who were enjoying the magnificent weather and scenery from the windows of the Britten Norman Islander Aircraft.

**Two views of Okiwi Station.** Photo: Neil Hayes





# OPERATION PATEKE

Brendan Coe

Great Barrier Island is a detached piece of the Coromandel Peninsula and the subsidence that separated it from the mainland has given it a rocky coastline with several offshore islets and pinnacles. It lies 55 miles north-east of Auckland and is some 110 square miles in area. Mt Hobson (2038ft) is the highest point. Originally exploited for timber and minerals, farming was tried at a later date and some extensive areas about the coasts were sown in pasture grasses. Today however, with a population of around 300 the island is mainly a holiday resort, and dense manuka/kanuka scrub covers most of the previously cleared

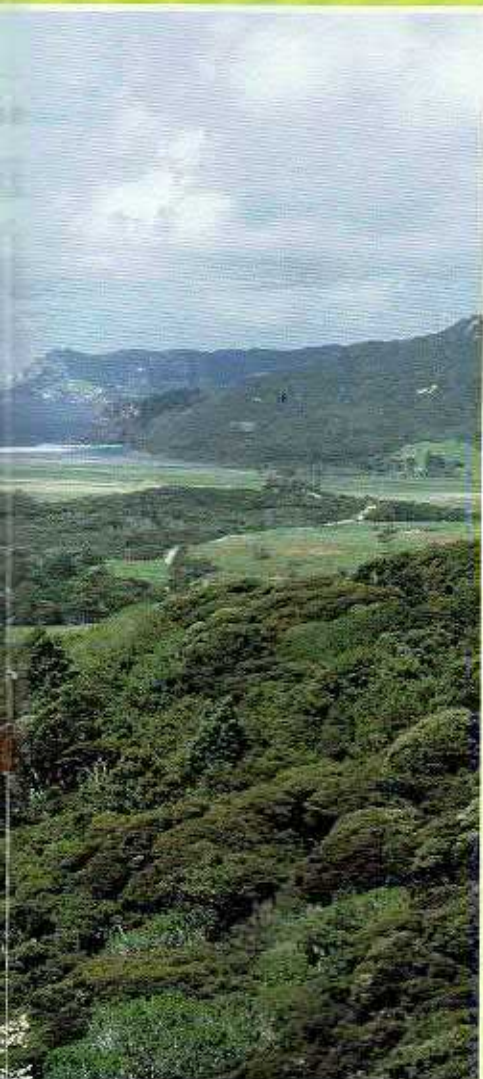
land. Small settlements are scattered round the coast at Tryphena in the south, Okupu, Awana, Okiwi and Port Fitzroy in the north-east, but the extreme ruggedness of the coast, especially on the western shore, does not allow for widespread development.

Soon the airstrip at Claris appeared before us and the plane descended for a smooth landing that ended at a small office and shelter that represented the terminal. We all disembarked and stretched our legs while taking in the peace and quiet and fresh sea air. Two days after leaving Wellington by car we were here, armed with a Department of Conservation permit to uplift five pairs of brown teal that expired in four days: Operation Pateke had started.

It really started with the onslaught of European settlement (1940-1850). Prior to that the brown teal (*Anas aucklandica chlorotis*) or pateke in Maori was widespread throughout parts of New Zealand. Always more common in the North Island than in the South Island they were recorded in most major wetlands and were in abundance in the Manawatu, Wairarapa, Waikato, Hauraki, Bay of Plenty and Northland. They were also recorded in Canterbury, Fiordland, Southland and Stewart Island. Because there were few trained observers of wildlife among the early settlers and even fewer who recorded their sightings in print, it is reasonable to assume that the brown

teal were present in other areas not noted from those early days. Hayes and Williams state that "the vigorous draining of swamps and clearing of forests which characterized 19th century New Zealand, together with the introduction of predatory mammals, precipitated a very rapid decline in brown teal numbers". By 1882 they were rare in Canterbury and were gone from the Wairarapa by 1900 as well as declining greatly in other areas. During the 1920's and 1930's the birds disappeared from many parts of the country altogether and the combined factors of habitat loss, predation by cats, rats and mustelids and hunting were the reasons. Brown teal were gamebirds up until 1921 and the Canterbury naturalist T.H. Potts, writing in 1882 said "the bag was only secured by real hard work in traversing very rough country. The list does not include one single teal or brown duck, a bird that was formerly so very abundant. In proof of its increasing rarity, last season, out of 95 ducks got on the opening day, only one couple of teal was bagged; the habit of the teal is to keep flying around; a flock of teal will keep you going all day — as some sportsmen say". The rest is history and from the inauguration of Ducks Unlimited in 1974, the brown teal has been and will continue to be the organisation's most important project.

"I'll get the taxi," said Jim Campbell as he







**Brown Teal in a typical Great Barrier Island stream. Very tame, this species will always need careful protection. Photo: Brendan Coe**

disappeared up the dusty road and around the corner. "Shouldn't be long either," said Grant Dumbell, following Jim to get the trail bike that he kept in a shed not far from the airstrip. A cloud of dust heralded Jim about half an hour later as he pulled up in an old Holden station wagon. The vehicle was a taxi, it said so on the door, so the gear was put in and we all climbed aboard. The springs were shot, some of the windows stayed up permanently and some down, and the interior decor was never envisaged by the manufacturer, but it went and it went well. We travelled over a lot of Great Barrier's 40 miles of gravel road in it and I for one will always feel relaxed and secure in any vehicle with the name Holden on it. Our destination was the lodge at Whangaparapara and we set off, with Grant and Marie leading the way on the trail bike. Grant had advised us to keep our mission secret while on the island as the locals were very aware of the endangered status of "their" brown teal and guarded the birds carefully. It was true too, and I found it heartening to listen to the various locals we dealt with talk about the birds. Their knowledge of them was quite good and not much happened to the birds that they did not know about. Grant was asked about his authority to remove the birds more than once and even showed the permit on one occasion. They were just making sure everything was proper which was quietly appreciated by the D.U. Directors. A twenty minute drive saw us at Whangaparapara Harbour and

a more picturesque place would be hard to imagine. The lodge was on a hill looking straight out to sea and the inlet shores were very rocky with huge pohutakawas growing over them. A small wharf with a few boats rocking at anchor completed an idyllic scene and we were soon shown our rooms and after settling in we gathered to wait for further instructions from Grant.

We were to go and meet Alan Gray, a local resident who lived at Awana and who quarried for aggregate for the roads. Alan was pleased to see us and showed us over his operation and we joined him for lunch at his house at Awana. The house was set on a hill and overlooked the grassy flats and the Awana River that was the home of a large population of brown teal numbering around 100 birds. After lunch Neil and Grant and myself set off to try and photograph the birds. We stalked across the grass to the water which was deep and slow moving with flax and scrub on the banks. A quiet approach and I was soon on the bank. Across the river against the far shore were about 50 brown teal. My immediate impression that it was no wonder they are endangered; the birds are hopelessly tame. They didn't fly away or show any sign of alarm, but slowly paddled away downstream, and we found this to be the case with all the brown teal that we saw. Grant could herd them up or down a stream so that we could photograph them and they had to be hard pressed to get them to fly. The habitat was also interesting in as much

as it was completely natural with the water being still to slow moving, and the banks having muddy little bays here and there with heavy overhanging vegetation of flax and carex and manuka scrub. The birds themselves were fascinating and typical of all waterfowl with plenty of interaction between individual birds, movement, colour and noise. We had no trouble taking a lot of photographs and the teal obliged for a good half an hour. Grant told us that the Awana population was very stable and he credited this to the special care that Alan Gray took in looking after them. Alan could see anybody that approached the birds at Awana and he also ran a cat patrol as well as doing regular counts and assisting wherever possible. On the way back I noticed something strange in the paddock. It was a stand of the type which you might put a water tank on, and on top of it was a small square box about the size that could hold a person sitting. The whole affair was painted green and there was a slit cut in the front for looking out of. "What is that?" I asked Grant. "It's my observation hide" he replied. "I've spent over 300 hours in it so far."

Now 300 hours is 7.5 40 hour weeks. It brought home to me the commitment and dedication that Grant has applied to his study of the brown teal and members may be interested to know a little more the man behind the name Grant Dumbell.

We see Grant fairly regularly at the Ducks Unlimited A.G.M. where he presents his brown teal report and we read of the scientific findings he presents in FLIGHT, but what is he really about?





**Safely ensconced in Norman Marsh's aviary.**

*Photo: Brenden Cook*



**Mr & Mrs Alan Gray being presented with a silver plate by DU President Jim Campbell. Grant Dumbell looks on.** *Photo: Neil Hayes*

Grant is on the right side of 30 and he started his career at Victoria University in Wellington where he completed a BSc (Hons) and followed this with a New Zealand Wildlife Service scholarship, and he has just completed his PhD with his thesis being on the brown teal. The study undertaken for his thesis was funded partly by the New Zealand Wildlife Service and the Department of Conservation and partly by Ducks Unlimited (\$8000.00 each approximately). The work involved numerous trips to Northland and Great Brarier and Grant estimated he has done 500 miles over the Island's dusty roads on a trail bike in the course of his work. He showed us some of the trap locations where he caught and banded over 400 teal and his knowledge of the birds is profound.

The next day we drive up the Island to look at Okiwi Station. What a beautiful place. Coming down the side of a steep hill we suddenly saw the station. Backed by dense stands of native bush it runs out to sea through mangrove swamp and estuaries that looked perfect teal habitat. The land is studded with stands of bush and the paddocks looked slightly incongruous amongst so much natural habitat. The current debate over control of Okiwi Station

between Landcorp and the Department of Conservation is a threat to this magnificent area and its endangered species. Native bird and waterfowl habitat it is, farm country it is not. We motored through to Port Fitzroy and met Don Woodcock, the conservator who gave us the background to the land debate. A dedicated man, he obviously enjoyed his job and my eyes opened wide when he showed us his tame branded rail. These birds run wild about the house and are strikingly marked and a lot bigger than I had thought, about the size of a small weka and similar in their inquisitive, darting gait. Don fed them and they seemed quite happy with their lot. An interesting sight.

That night, when Grant told us how we were to catch the birds we had come for, we listened carefully.

Brown teal feed in the paddocks at night, in ones and twos, worming and turning over cow pats for insects. The idea, said Grant, was to try and hold the birds in the light of a torch, sneak up and put a trout landing net over them. It sounded simple and it would have been if there had not been bumpy uneven paddocks, water filled ditches, fences that loomed up unexpectedly, and all around an inky darkness. We

set off from Alan Gray's at 10pm for the Awana flats. There were four catchers and three baggers and the idea was that netted birds were brought to the baggers who sexed and banded the birds and checked their size and condition — good healthy stock was what was wanted.

I hunted off by myself and soon saw a teal feeding. I approached at a low run and it scuttled off with me in pursuit. I quickly gained on time a lunge with the net and I had a brown teal. I took it back to the baggers who put it in a sack and went off again. The whole episode took over three hours and in the end we had caught sixteen birds. Jim and I caught the last two and as we approached the others I heard Neil exclaim "Look at the size of that big male". On drawing closer I could see Norman Marsh, sitting on the ground with pipe clenched firmly in teeth, a teal expertly held in his left hand and the right hand clenched around a sack full of teal. He looked happy. When the five pairs were chosen we let the other birds go and returned to the Grays for a celebratory nightcap. A very successful adventure had been completed.

Soon it was time to go. Grant had hired a private plane to take Neil Hayes, myself and Norman Marsh back to Ardmore so that suspicions would not be raised over our boxes of birds. Soon we landed at the airport and commenced our journey down to the Broadlands Wildlife Trust where the teal were put in an aviary while we stayed the night with Norman Marsh. The creation of this magnificent waterfowl area is a story in itself and I hope to write about it one day. The next day we drove to Wellington and released the birds into Neil's aviary where they will acclimatise and be flock mated and will bring a vital new blood to Ducks Unlimited's Operation Pateke.

*An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand. A.H. McLintock, Government Printer, 1966. The Status, Aviculture and Re-Establishment of Brown Teal in New Zealand. F. Neil Hayes and Murray Williams. Out in the Open. T.H. Potts. Capper Press 1976.*



# CHAPTER NEWS



Shoot organiser, Brendan Coe, presents K. Hardie with the shotgun.

**DUCKS UNLIMITED EKETAHUNA CHAPTER  
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NAME..... ADDRESS.....

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## NEW CHAPTERS FORMED

Two new DU Chapters have recently been formed — the Palmerston North Chapter and the Whakatane Chapter. Further info can be obtained from the DU Secretary.

## WELLINGTON CHAPTER

DU Wellington Chapter's simulated field shoot at the Hutt Valley Gun Club on May 1st was a tremendous success, with 145 people attending. This resulted in over \$2,500 being raised for DU's wetland projects.

Thanks go to Brendan Coe, Keith O'Riley, Peter Wenman and Fred Kent for organising a superb shoot.

Prizes were given to the first 10th place getters in each grade, and the first 5 place getters in each grade went in the draw for a gun. (A very successful ploy for attracting shooters to a major trophy event).

1st A	grade was	L Bremner	— 62/70
1st B	grade	R Bryant	— 61/70
1st C	grade	D Smith	— 58/70
1st Unregistered		B Parks	— 58/70
1st Junior		C Wood	—

Winner of the gun was 2nd in B grade, K Hardie. Congratulations to all place getters. A special thanks must go to all sponsors of our sport namely Winchester N.Z. Ltd, Kilwell Sports, Hooson Industries Ltd, Hayes & Associates, Rod & Rifle Magazine, Andy Tannock's Hunting & Fishing, Sunley Chemist, Treister & Co, and Levin Sports Centre.

Because of the outstanding success of the shoot, especially in terms of the total number of shooters taking part, the committee donated \$200 on the day to Ducks Unlimited which went down well with all those present.

## EKETAHUNA CHAPTER

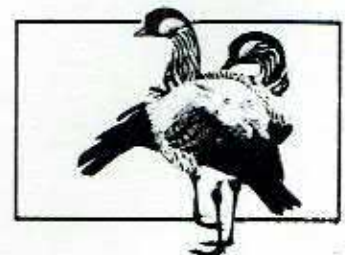
The Eketahuna Chapter will have much pleasure in hosting 16 international visitors from DU Canada, USA & Mexico at the Eketahuna Chapter's annual dinner. The dinner will be on September 16th at the Solway Park Hotel, Masterton. It is hoped that the evening will be a huge success and really show our visitors what we can do in NZ.

Those who attended the last Eketahuna annual dinner will know that everyone is assured of an excellent evening.

Mark Friday the 16th December in your diary now. You will need to book early to be assured of a ticket; so fill in the form.

## New from DU Sales Dept

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# NORTHLAND BROWN TEAL PROGRESS REPORT

G.S. Dumbell

## INTRODUCTION

This is the first progress report for the research into the ecology of brown teal in Northland and covers the four months up until the end of April 1988. Since January, five field trips have been made to Northland, and one to Great Barrier Island. The trip to Great Barrier Island was required to retrieve field equipment for use in Northland and was timed to allow a survey of peak brown teal numbers at seven chosen indicator sites. This data can be compared to similar counts made over the previous three years and forms a beginning point for long term annual monitoring of the Great Barrier Island population.

The five Northland fieldtrips have been concentrated in the second halves of each month, with one exception. An early March trip was undertaken to continue compiling habitat inventories of the various brown teal

sites, but this was disrupted by Cyclone Bola. Total field time since January has been 36 days and the different aspects of the Northland work are discussed below.

## BROWN TEAL STATUS IN NORTHLAND

Because brown teal flock over the summer period the accurate estimation of numbers is only possible during this time. The approach has been to visit all the major brown teal sites at least once during each fieldtrip to build up a picture of monthly variation in the number of brown teal at each site. It is expected that these Northland sites will show the same pattern of use as the major brown teal sites identified on Great Barrier Island. In addition, areas apparently suitable for brown teal have been visited and searched as well as areas from which anecdotal sightings have been made. This has led to a dramatic increase in the number of birds known to be in Northland, as well as the discovery of a previously unknown population (Table 1).

**Table 1:** A summary of the highest counts of brown teal at each site from January to April 1988

Site	# Birds
Whananaki West — River Roost	84
Whananaki East — Rockell's Road	15
Mimiwhangata	54
Ngahau Bay	12
Helena Bay — Exley's	35
Tutaematai *1	99
Parekura Bay — Elliot's	3
Parekura Bay — Bentzen's Farm	90
Parekura Bay — Bentzen's Pond	16
Clendon Cove *2	85
Takou Bay	0
Kaeo River	0
Sundry Location *3	52
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>545</b>

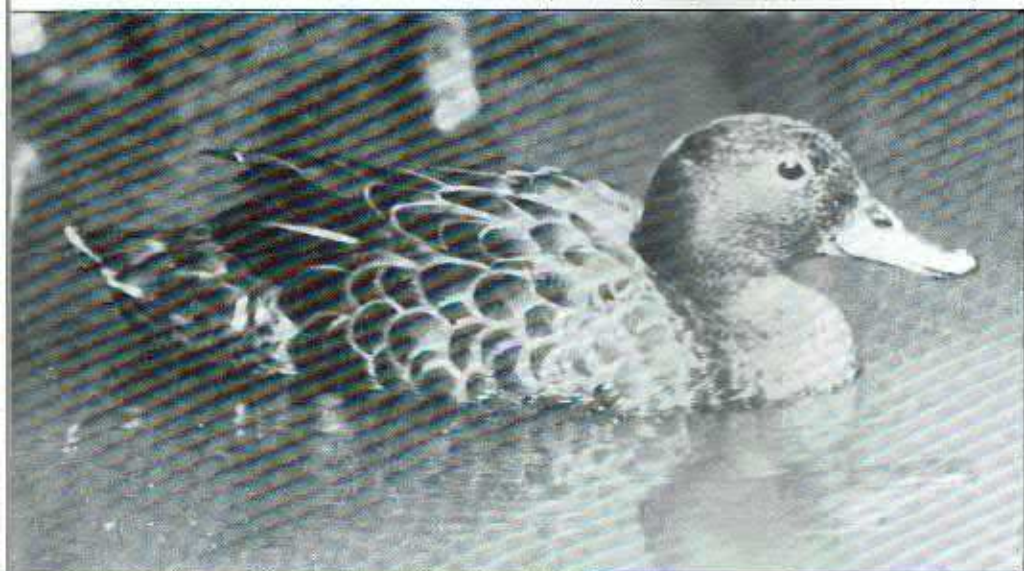
\*1 New site located in northern Whangaruru Harbour

\*2 Includes birds roosting on a nearby pond as well

\*3 Includes birds at 13 other small sites

The above total is the combined highest counts from all sites as numbers were very stable over the January to March period. As expected counts began declining in April.

In most cases each site was only visited once each month, therefore, it is unlikely that the true number of birds present was counted. Clearly the true number present is not smaller than the actual number counted and experience on Great Barrier Island has shown that often the true number is a lot greater. However, in this case the mean count difference technique (Dumbell, 1987), which was developed to extrapolate from the number present, is not suitable as 18% of birds were found in groups less than 20. When this occurs it is unlikely that the mean count difference, as estimated from Great Barrier Island counts,



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is accurate as the birds on Great Barrier Island occur in much larger groups. As mean group size decreases, as it has in Northland relative to Great Barrier Island, an absolute deviation assumes much larger proportions. However, the technique can be modified to accommodate this, so long as a large number of sites are counted. The absolute mean difference estimated on Great Barrier Island has been converted to a percentage of the mean of the first counts from which it was estimated. This percentage difference can then be used to extrapolate the total number of birds counted in Northland to a total likely to be present over the whole range of sites. This percentage deviation also allows the estimation of the likely magnitude of the mean absolute count difference for brown teal sites of the size encountered in Northland.

The newly discovered population is in the upper reaches of the Whangaruru Harbour and local information suggests that more birds may be present than already counted. A further unconfirmed report of a group of birds in the Takou Bay area, which included possible fecal sign (R. Parrish, *pers. comm.*), is also encouraging. It therefore seems likely that further careful and more extensive surveys will increase the total further, as to date only areas near the previously known sites have been searched. It is hoped to pursue this next summer when the Whangaruru Harbour, Waikare Inlet and parts of the Hokianga Harbour will be looked at.

Over the winter old records of brown teal will be collated and these will be checked next summer. Further to this, information on recent brown teal sightings has been solicited from OSNZ members, acclimatisation society members and the general public. This has been done by addressing meetings in Whangarei, giving a radio interview and by submitting a short note to OSNZ News. This has already resulted in a small group of brown teal being located at Tutukaka. These birds have been resident for over a year and successfully bred during 1987.

#### POPULATION SUBDIVISION IN NORTHLAND

While the confirmation of larger numbers of brown teal than previously known in Northland is important, it must be remembered that these birds do not form one con-

Great Barrier Island mean first count	=	49 ± 7
Great Barrier Island mean highest count	=	64 ± 8
Great Barrier Island mean count difference	=	15 ± 3
Mean count difference × 100		
Mean first count		= 30%
Extrapolated Northland Total	= 545 × 1.30	= 708 birds
Likely Mean Count Difference	= 703 - 545	
	= 25 sites	
	6 birds	

tinuous population. Although there is no hard evidence to show where one population ends and another begins, the results from Great Barrier Island, when combined with anecdotal information from Northland, allow some provisional estimates to be made (Table 2).

Local information from Whananaki suggests that birds move from Rockell's Road to the River Roost and from the River Roost to Whananaki South. However, although approximately 200 banded birds have been released at Mimiwhangata none have been located at either Whananaki or Helena Bay suggesting that these two sites to the north of Whananaki support separate and smaller local populations of birds. The status of the Ngahau Bay site is unclear, however, it is more likely to be allied to Mimiwhangata than to Helena Bay.

The newly located population in the Whangaruru Harbour is likely to be completely separate from the above sites and from the birds in the Bay of Islands. As a result it is important that a more accurate indication of its size and extent is gained.

The birds in the Bay of Islands can be provisionally separated into two groups. The first includes all of Parekura Bay encompassing Bentzen Farm, Bentzen's Pond and the site at Elliotts, while the second includes Clendon Cove and the nearby pond site, which has been named Gordon's Pond.

North of the Bay of Islands there are no recently confirmed groups of brown teal, although the Takou Bay record is encouraging. As a result it must be restated (Dumbell, 1988) that if the brown teal populations in the Kaero - Takou Bay area are indeed defunct, then the decline in Northland has progressed alarmingly since 1979 (Hayes and Williams, 1982).

The minimum size of each presumed population has been calculated by adding together the counts from each site within

**Table 2:** Presumed brown teal populations and their estimated sizes

Presumed Population	Minimum Size	Estimated Size
Whananaki	118	153
Mimiwhangata	66	86
Helena Bay	35	46
Whangaruru North	117	152
Parekura Bay	109	142
Clendon Cove	85	111
Kaero - Takou Bay	0	0

the presumed population's area. This minimum population size has then been enlarged by 30% using the same logic as above.

The clear indication is that no local population of brown teal in Northland is known to exceed 200 birds. This may be compared with the largest local population of brown teal on Great Barrier Island which is estimated to contain over 700 birds. As a result, any management initiative, in any area, must take into account the likely effect on the local population of birds and not assume that a steady stream of immigrants is occurring from other areas.

#### MIMIWHANGATA RELEASE SUCCESS

The 1987 release of captive reared birds at Mimiwhangata was carried out in September and all 45 birds released were individually colour banded. This release date was almost three months later than the release in 1986 when it was carried out in July. The later release date was chosen to try and increase the survival of birds in the month following release, when 50% of the released birds disappeared in 1986 (Dumbell, 1988a).

Unfortunately the 1987 release was not followed as intensively as in 1986 so the 1987 results are not as thorough as first hoped. However, a reliable minimum esti-



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mate of the number of birds surviving in January 1988 was achieved (F.N. Hayes, pers. comm.), allowing the survival of 1986 and 1987 birds to be compared directly over the first 14 weeks after release. These estimates can also be compared with the expected survival, given the results from Great Barrier (Table 3).

**Table 3:** The relative success of the 1986 and 1987 releases of captive bred birds at Mimiwhangata

Year	Number Released	Number Surviving	Percent Survival
1986	104	39	38
1987	45	35	78
Expected	—	—	88

In both 1986 and 1987 the observed release success was significantly worse than the expected success (1986  $X^2 = 264.6$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ; 1987  $X^2 = 5.6$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), however, the 1987 release success was significantly better than in 1986 ( $X^2 = 20.5$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). This indicates that while the 1987 release did not achieve the same level of survival as expected from wild birds it did have a significantly better result than the 1986 release.

Both releases were carried out at the same site, using the same release technique, with the time of year being the major difference. However, these releases were in different years and there is no way of testing whether this had any effect. As a result, this year's release of birds is being planned so the effect of the time of year may be separated from any effect of releasing in different years. It is also planned to test the effect of release method on release survival by incorporating the gentle release, rather than the direct release which is currently being used.

#### BANDING

A mixed sex/age cohort of birds was banded at Bentzen's Farm in March. This will allow the survival of wild brown teal in Northland to be assessed next summer once sufficient time has passed for mortality to deplete the cohort. It also allowed a method to sex birds using body measurements to be field tested. The Bentzen's Farm site was chosen because no captive bred birds have been released there, hope-



fully allowing an unbiased estimate of survival to be obtained next year.

A total of 36 birds were individually colour banded, including 16 females and 20 males. The first 10 birds of each sex were also weighed so they could be compared with weights of birds measured on Great Barrier Island at the same time of year (Table 4).

Weight is one indicator of condition, therefore, if the Northland birds were significantly lighter than the Great Barrier Island birds it may point to a lack of suitable feeding opportunities over the summer. As such the expectation was to find no significant weight differences between the two groups. The various comparisons have been made using Student-t tests with a 95% significance level.

In both Northland and on Great Barrier Island Males were significantly heavier than females so the comparison between Northland and Great Barrier Island had to be made separately for each sex. While there was no significant difference between the two samples of females, Northland males were significantly heavier than Great Barrier Island males. The reason for this is unclear, however, it is also unimportant. The main point is that neither sex in Northland was lighter, therefore possibly in worse condition, than similar birds on Great Barrier Island.

#### HABITAT INVENTORIES

Preliminary to preparing a brown teal recovery plan, habitat inventories were compiled

**Table 4:** Comparison of weights of male and female brown teal in and between Northland and Great Barrier Island

Site	Sex	n	Mean (g)	S.E.(g)	
Northland	M	10	690	9	t = 8.4
	F	10	555	13	p < 0.05
Great Barrier Island	M	24	585	18	t = 3.0
	F	26	515	15	p < 0.05
			Males t = 3.8 p < 0.05	Females t = 1.6 p < 0.05	

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for 28 of the major brown teal sites in Northland and on Great Barrier Island (Dumbell, 1988b). Descriptive information was collected for roosting habitat, potential feeding habitat and potential breeding habitat, with supporting information on land tenure, management to date, possible disturbances and potential predators.

In addition, semi-quantitative data was collected for 14 roosting habitat variables at each of the Northland sites to support similar data collected on Great Barrier Island. This data will allow a direct comparison of the roosting habitat used by brown teal in Northland and on Great Barrier Island with a view towards detecting any differences or similarities. Once this analysis has been completed it should be possible to make more definite management recommendations for each site than currently possible.

### BREEDING OBSERVATIONS

During the visits to all sites a note has been made of any breeding activity detected. Although no nest searches have been made, several late broods have been found and definite juveniles have been located at several sites. This confirms that breeding is occurring at most sites and that ducklings are surviving to independence. However, it remains to be seen whether productivity is sufficient to balance mortality.

Observations to date (R. Anderson, pers. comm.) suggest that brown teal in Northland make significant use of ponds for breeding. As a result, potential management may include providing suitable ponds in chosen areas and over the coming breeding season it is hoped to assess both productivity in Northland and the characteristics of ponds that are being used for breeding. Initially it was hoped to use the same ponds as were used for a similar study in the 1970's however, these now appear to be unsuitable. A series of potentially suitable ponds does exist at the Mimiwhangata Farm Park, and these may be able to be compared with ponds in the Bay of Islands.

Since releases have been carried out in Northland there has been little evidence of breeding by the released birds. Munn (1986) detected a released bird breeding with a wild bird soon after the 1986 release, however, the attempt failed before the eggs hatched. This year a female, released in 1986, was detected with a wild male, suggesting that they were paired. A further 1986 female was also found with a 1987 male. These birds were definitely paired and were accompanied by two very large ducklings confirming that successful breeding is occurring between captive reared brown teal in the wild.

### DISCUSSION

The principal aim over the coming months is to try and assess the breeding activity of Northland brown teal. The comparison of ponds being used for breeding and those being avoided will hopefully highlight habitat variables important for successful breeding. This will also be combined with an analysis of nest site characteristics using data collected on Great Barrier Island. If possible an estimate of brown teal

productivity will also be made, however, there may be a problem finding enough broods in order to make any definite statement. This is due to the smaller population sizes found in Northland compared with Great Barrier Island.

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Year	Property	Hect	Work	Cost
1984	A. Flexman, Whangamarino	30	Stopbanking	\$2,000
1985	M. Pearce, Lake Wairarapa	10	Restoration - 2 Lagoons	\$3,000
1984	Matapouri Roost Site	3	Fencing 200 metres	\$1,000
1985	Murray-Ainsley, Eketahuna	4	Lagoon Creation	\$500
1986	D. Collins, Eketahuna	2	Ponding	\$1,000
1986	J. Carson, Whananaki	1	Roost Site Fencing	\$3,000
1986	Rathkeale College	1/2	Display Ponds & Fencing	\$5,000
1986	Home Lagoon, Wairarapa	35	Pipe water from Ruamahanga	\$14,600
1986	M. Hodgins, Mt Bruce	1/2	Wildlife Centre Ponds	\$500
1986	Masterton Intermediate School	-	Display Ponds & Fencing	\$1,000
1986	A. Flexman, Whangamarino	30	Stopbanking	\$750
1987	Sinclair Wetlands	300	Wetland Improvements	\$24,000
1987	Te Hapua, Waikanae	6	Lagoon Creation	\$25,000
1987	Areas A & B Otago	170	Management Costs	\$3,000
1988	Hukanui, Pahiatua	3	Lagoon Restoration	\$600
1988	Sinclair Wetlands	-	Educational Centre	\$280,000

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