

Winchester

NEW ZEALAND LTD

*is proud to support Ducks Unlimited (NZ) Inc.
in their efforts to propagate and preserve
New Zealand's rare waterfowl.*



Wetland development at Mr D. McLachlan's Te Anau property.



WINCHESTER

MORE THAN A NAME. A LEGEND.

Distributed in New Zealand By: Winchester New Zealand

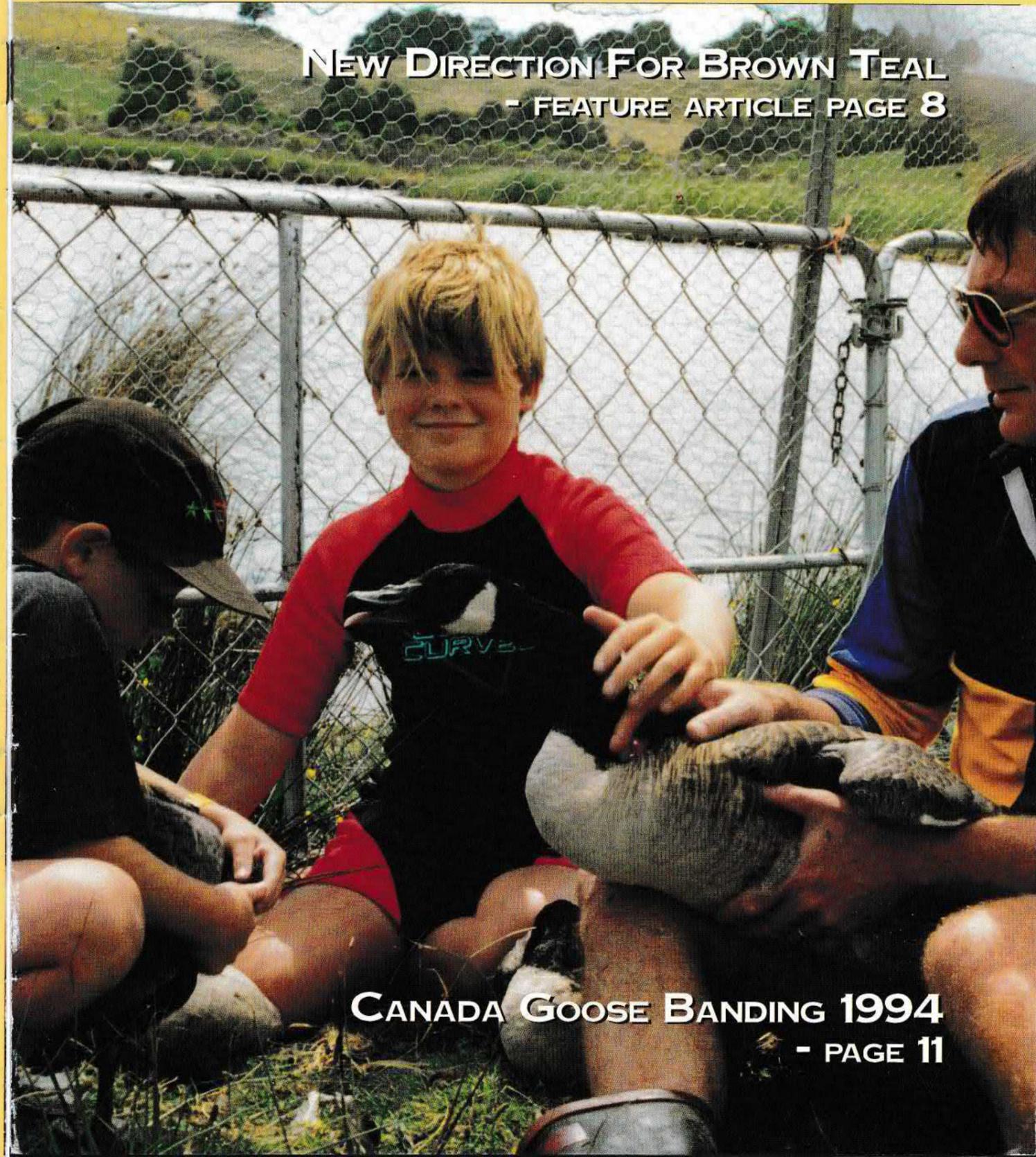
JANUARY 1994
ISSUE 78

FLIGHT



DUCKS UNLIMITED NEW ZEALAND INC. in association with Ducks Unlimited Canada, USA, Australia and Mexico

NEW DIRECTION FOR BROWN TEAL
- FEATURE ARTICLE PAGE 8



CANADA GOOSE BANDING 1994
- PAGE 11

DUCKS UNLIMITED NEW ZEALAND INC., PO BOX 9795 AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CO-PATRONS:	Lady Diana Isaac, Christchurch, Norman Marsh, Reporoa
CHAIRMAN:	Jim Campbell, Masterton
PRESIDENT:	David Rice, LLB, Auckland
VICE PRESIDENT:	David Smith, LLB, Auckland <i>("Whio" Supervisor - Blue Duck)</i>
TREASURER:	Glenys Hansen, Eketahuna
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:	Grant Dumbell, Auckland
SECRETARY:	Chris Hooson, Wellington
SINCLAIR WETLANDS MANAGER:	Horrie Sinclair, MBE, Outram
CONSERVATION ADVISOR:	Dr. John Craig, Auckland

BOARD MEMBERS

Diane Pritt, Ohakune
(National Sales, Conference Organiser)

Ken Cook, Palmerston North

Howard Egan, Carterton
("Gretel" Supervisor - Grey Teal)

Dave Johnston, Reporoa
("Royal Swan" Supervisor - Mute Swan)

Alan Wilks, Greytown
("Pateke" Supervisor - Brown Teal)

Graham Gurr, Auckland
(Art Committee, National Raffle)

Ian Lyver, Hastings

HONORARY MEMBERS

Keith Barnett, Tokaanu

Horrie Sinclair, MBE, Outram

Bill Wilkinson, Wellington

Adrienne Longuet, Wellington

Ralph Adams, Upper Hutt

Lady Diana Isaac, Christchurch

Tony Flexman, Pokeno

Laurie Piper, Christchurch

Stephen Loach, Dunedin

Sir Peter Elworthy

NEW ZEALAND LIFE MEMBERS

Norman Cameron, Carterton	Chris Hooson, Wellington	Colleen Hansen, Eketahuna
Ian Pirani, Katikati	Leigh McKinnon, Katikati	Miss O.D. Pearce, Wairarapa
Mr J. H. D. Ward, Huntly	Alan Fielding, Palmerston North	Craig Ewing, Carterton
Michael Bourke, Kimbolton	Peter McLeod, Christchurch	Mark Pearce, Wairarapa
Isaac Wildlife Trust, Christchurch	Euan Bidwell, Taupo	Marie McEntee, Auckland
Fred Bailey, Auckland	Andre Terpstra, Murupara	Dave Robinson, Te Puke
Norman Marsh, Reporoa	Mrs Dulcie Barnett, Tokaanu	Equine Nursery, Te Puke
Jim Campbell, Masterton	Les Cleveland, Dunedin	Otamaire Trust, Hunterville
Cheryl Pirani, Auckland	Ross Meads, Turangi	Craig Worth, Hamilton
Michael Hucks, Taupo	Mark Newcomb, Auckland	Ame Nielson, Masterton
Myles White, Dunedin	Kerry Butler, Waipawa	Mathew Paku, Masterton
Andy Gurney, Featherston	Andrew Nicholson, Wellington	Graham Henry, Wellington
Central North Island Wildlife	Mr T. G. Pearce, Wairarapa	Mr H. Honegger, Otaki
Conservancy Council, Rotorua	Mr S. B. L. Pearce, Wairarapa	Lt. Brent Fotheringham, Wellington
Mark Grace, Hunterville	Mr B. M. L. Pearce, Wairarapa	David Mitchell, Christchurch
Mrs M. Davison, Wyndham	Dave Johnston, Reporoa	Dawn Pirani, Katikati
Glenys Hansen, Eketahuna	Mrs L. Tapp, Northland	Don McCulloch, Wellington
Brent McDonald, Outram	Mr M. Tapp, Northland	John Sax, Auckland

INTERNATIONAL LIFE MEMBERS

William Barrett, VIC, Australia	Mr K. Ball, Papua New Guinea	Omer Long, USA
Dr. Tony Reiger, USA	Mrs K. Ball, Papua New Guinea	Jean Luxford, USA
Ken Lowry, VIC, Australia	John Belz, USA	Mr & Mrs Nugent, USA
William D. Wright, USA	Beatty Burke, USA	Mark Pierce, USA
Mr & Mrs Pat Nolan, USA	Robert Corrigan Jr., USA	John Pittenger, USA
Hazard Campbell, USA	Bill de Journett, USA	Peter Pund, USA
Dr. Duncan Sinclair, Canada	Mr & Mrs William Dean, USA	Sis & Ward Reilly, USA
Mrs Gina Campbell, USA	John Egger, USA	Edwin Roberts Jr., USA
Herb Moulding, Canada	Robert Ehrlich, USA	Robert Strahs, USA
Paul Roman, USA	Ungene Engrav, USA	Charles Thomas, USA
Barry Morrison, Canada	Basil George, Wales	John Walker, USA
Mrs Pat Hall, USA	James Hulbert, USA	Ebe Walter, USA
Mr & Mrs Clark Springer, USA	Garth Jackson, Canada	Tom Williams, USA
Richard Trethewey, Canada	Donald Kaatz, USA	Stephen Lund, USA
Robert Eberhardt, USA	Bud Kapilla, USA	Don & Barb Rollins, USA
Tom Arvin, USA	Marc Karnes, USA	Robert Middleton, USA
Elton Ball, NSW Australia	James Konkel, USA	Duncan Campbell, Canada
		Tom Pearman, USA
		Gary Harrigan, USA

FLIGHT: TESTIMONY TO DUCKS UNLIMITED'S PROGRESSION

Welcome to 1994 and to another year of moving forward for Ducks Unlimited New Zealand. Welcome too, to this first issue of our "new look" Flight magazine. I hope you had safe and enjoyable festive season.

Ducks Unlimited is continually moving forward and recognition of the importance of conveying this to our members has resulted in this revamped Flight. Flight is an integral part of keeping all our members informed and in touch with Ducks Unlimited's activities. It is our flagship to both our existing and potential members and this new look "Flight" will become more informative for our members with highlights of past events and notice of events to come as each issue rolls off the press.

The updated layout and attention to details and finishing touches have set a new standard for communicating to our members and makes Flight more interesting

David Rice

to read. Modifications will continue to be made as and when required. Any thoughts you have will certainly be considered.

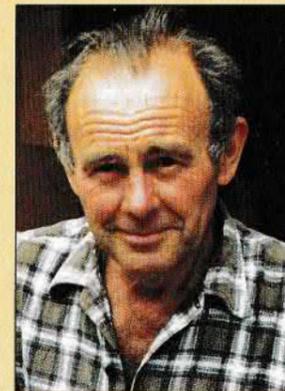
Ducks Unlimited must be about people as much as it is about wetlands and waterfowl. Without people, our members, there would be no advancement in the protection and enhancement of these delicate ecosystems and the lives they support. Flight will also be the subject of advancement and enhancement as, without this communication, recognition of our work would be less noticeable and less appreciated.

The essence of Ducks Unlimited, for our members, is contact with wetlands and waterfowl and experiencing "hands on" enjoyment of contributing to the conservation of a diminishing habitat and

you are encouraged to take part where you can. Our first cover photo is testimony to this - People, wetlands and waterfowl. Director Chris Hooson, with member Tristan McCallum and Lance Barrow, son of Taranaki Fish and Game secretary Nolene Barrow, at Ohakune on the recent Canada Goose banding operation, you can read about this event on page eleven.

Contributions to Flight and suggestions for development are greatly appreciated as the compilation of this magazine is no mean feat! I pay particular tribute to Brendan Coe of Lithographic Services who has edited and published "Flight" over many years, and who continues to do so.

Thanks also to Art Services in Wellington and Carolyn Hooson who have worked to upgrade the magazine without a break in production. I hope you enjoy the new look magazine and the further progression of your organisation.



ALAN WILKS

Alan has been a member of Ducks Unlimited for fifteen years, and a Director for three years. He is Operation Pateke Supervisor (Brown Teal) and also the co-ordinator for the Pearce Wetlands.

Alan has a mixed background in firstly farming - his occupation since age fourteen in England, and again for four and a half years in Marlborough after emigrating to New Zealand in 1951.

He joined broadcasting in 1955 and in 1956, as Alan Jervis, freelanced in television, radio and film, retiring in 1986.

Alan and his wife, Diana moved to Greytown in 1987 where Alan has established a small wetland on a friend's farm not far from home. He also enjoys his vegetable garden, tinkering as a do-it-yourselfer and, of course, ducks.



DAVID RICE

David has been a member of Ducks Unlimited for ten years, a Director for six years and a Chapter Committee member for seven years. His current role is President.

A lawyer by occupation, David's interest in conservation started through his grandfather who was a keen hunter, wildlife ranger and active in the then Acclimatisation Society movement.

David joined Ducks Unlimited after having served for twenty years on the local Acclimatisation Society sub-branch in Manurewa and became interested in Ducks Unlimited from there. His first AGM at Wairakei impressed him and he soon joined the Auckland Chapter.

David's other interests revolve around hunting, rugby, touch football, harness racing, coaching rugby and he has represented Counties at the Nationals in 1993.

He and his wife Trina have three children, and spend time at their 3.5 hectare south of Auckland which is also featured in the book "New Zealand's Shy Places" by Gordon Stephenson. The wetland is a sanctuary for many species and is adjacent to the Whangamarino Wetland.

MISSION STATEMENT

As part of the ongoing process of planning for the future of Ducks Unlimited New Zealand Inc, the Board of Directors has now adopted the following Statement of Mission, Goal and Objectives for the organisation. These will serve as the guiding principles by which the organisation will be managed and developed and will prominently feature in our communications. Members are invited to forward their comments on this statement for evaluation by the Board of Directors.

OUR MISSION

We are a voluntary membership based society dedicated to the conservation of New Zealand wetlands through:

- wetland restoration and development
- breeding programmes for threatened waterfowl
- advocacy and education of wetland values

By these means we seek to ensure the ethical and sustainable use of wetland resources by all existing and future users.

OUR GOAL

A secure future for New Zealand's wetlands and their waterfowl.

OUR OBJECTIVES

We will pursue our mission through the delivery of well targeted, cost effective, scientifically based, pro-active conservation projects.

We will strive to commit the highest possible percentage of our resources to the pursuit of our goal by ensuring that our organisation is efficiently managed.

We will continue to develop our organisation by setting realistic goals to increase both our financial resources and our profile within the community, while always remaining accountable to our members.

SIMULATED FIELD CLAY TARGET CHAMPIONSHIPS 1993

This shoot was conducted by the Manawatu Chapter and was held on the property of Chris and John Puklowski at Rangiotu near Palmerston North. There was an attendance of 47 shooters with four visitors from Wairarapa, otherwise all were Manawatu shooters.

The Board of D.U. was represented by Chairman Jim Campbell and local Director Ken Cook.

The very interesting course of two rounds of 31 targets was enjoyed on a fine, warm day with almost no wind.

On the last station three pairs were thrown from opposite sides of Oroua River while the shooter stood in the middle of a swing bridge at midstream. Most shooters handled it quite well.

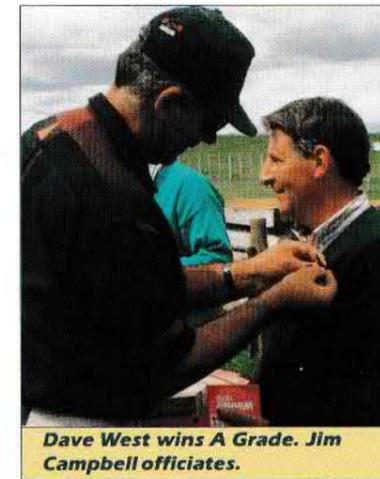
The standard of shooting was very high, with an average score of 50 out of 62.

The shoot was very generously sponsored by Winchester N.Z. Ltd and it was pleasing to see the majority of shooters using Winchester ammunition.

Dominion Breweries were also prominent with sponsored prizes as were Hunting and Fishing of Palmerston North.

A big thank you to those people and also to the many local people who contributed to the prize list which meant that every shooter received a prize.

Special thanks to Chris and John Puklowski for the use of their farm and facilities, incidentally it was also their wedding anniversary.



Dave West wins A Grade. Jim Campbell officiates.

Top score was 59/62 shot by Chris Beattie taking out H.O.A. after a shoot off with Geoff George for the top D.U.



B Grade went to Ted Hansen. Jim Campbell congratulates.

unregistered shooter.

D.U. second place went to Philip Budding who had finished his second round of 55/62 when latecomer Geoff George arrived on the ground.

A-Grade was won by Dave West on 56/62. Dave is the Chapter Chairman and was the main organiser of the shoot. B-Grade was won by Ted Hansen of Eketahuna 55/62.

C-Grade was won by John Wilkinson of Palmerston North 31/62.

After Jim Campbell had pinned the medals on the winners and handed out loads of prizes, many of the crowd stayed on to enjoy a convivial hour or two.

Thanks to the Manawatu Chapter for a well run and enjoyable shoot.

RELOADERS SUPPLIES LTD

NO. 1 IN N.Z. FOR ALL YOUR SPORTING SUPPLIES

WRITE TO PO BOX 13-010 ONEHUNGA OR TEL (09) 665-407 FOR FREE PRICE LIST



THE BIRDS OF THE WETLANDS

This educational article has been reprinted from "Wetland Watch," the newsletter of The New Zealand Waterfowl and Wetlands Trust.

In New Zealand the term 'waterfowl' is generally taken to refer to ducks, geese and swans, who are members of the worldwide order of birds called the Anseriformes. However, on the international scene, waterfowl are more often defined as "birds who are ecologically dependent on wetlands." As such, the term also includes a great many birds who are not members of the Anseriformes. Internationally, the term 'wildfowl' is more often used to just describe the ducks, geese and swans.

So what determines whether a bird is ecologically dependant on wetlands? To do this the bird's life history is examined to see if there is any point in either its annual cycle or its life cycle at which point the resources it needs to survive, or breed can only be supplied by wetland habitat. If that point is found then the bird can be said to be ecologically dependant on wetlands, as without access to that type of habitat the chances of the bird either breeding or surviving have been markedly reduced.

Ducks, geese and swans are probably the best known of all the waterfowl, hence the assumption that the term waterfowl refers solely to them. Clearly they are waterfowl as they are dependent on wetlands for almost every facet of their ecology. In this they are mostly identified with freshwater wetlands, however, there are other groups of birds who are just as dependent on wetlands, albeit different types of wetlands.

The Charadriiformes is the order of birds which contain the waders, gulls, terns and auks and is another worldwide group of birds. Because it is such a large group it contains subgroups who can be found in both freshwater and in marine and estuarine environments. Some of them even take a mix and match approach to life by moving between freshwater and saltwater wetlands at different times of the year while others periodically move in and out of wetlands altogether.

For many people, saltwater habitats are not generally thought of as wetlands. However, when you realise that the internationally recognised definition of a

wetland is "an area of marsh, fen peatland or water, whether natural or artificial, permanent or temporary, with water that is static or flowing, fresh, brackish or salt, including areas of marine water the depth of which at low tides does not exceed six metres" then almost anything has the potential to be a wetland.

There is still other groups of birds who are tightly linked to wetlands. The grebes and dabchicks (Podicipediformes) also occur throughout the world on freshwater wetlands. They are one group of birds who are possibly even more dependent on wetland habitat than the Anseriformes as they only leave the water to nest. Even then they build their nests as floating structures.

The Pelecaniformes includes the pelicans, gannets, shags and cormorants along with the tropical frigate and tropic birds while the Ciconiiformes groups the herons, bitterns, ibises and spoonbills. These two groups also include species whose dependency on wetlands is almost as diverse as the wetlands themselves.

The last major group which is largely associated with wetlands is the Gruiformes and includes the cranes and rails. Again this group is found worldwide, however some species do spend their lives away from wetlands. The New Zealand weka is an example of a rail which is not ecologically dependent on wetlands, instead it is more a bird of the bush. The largest order of birds in the world is the Passeriformes, or perching birds, and even within this group there can still be found species of birds who are ecologically dependent on wetlands. Probably the best New Zealand example is the fernbird, a shy retiring inhabitant of the reedbeds who is surprisingly widely spread and easily found by the observer willing to take the time and effort.

With all these candidates as potential inhabitants of a wetland it is not surprising that of all the wild New Zealand habitats, wetlands support the largest number of different bird species by far. And because wetlands are actually a patchwork mosaic of different habitats, birds which are not highly

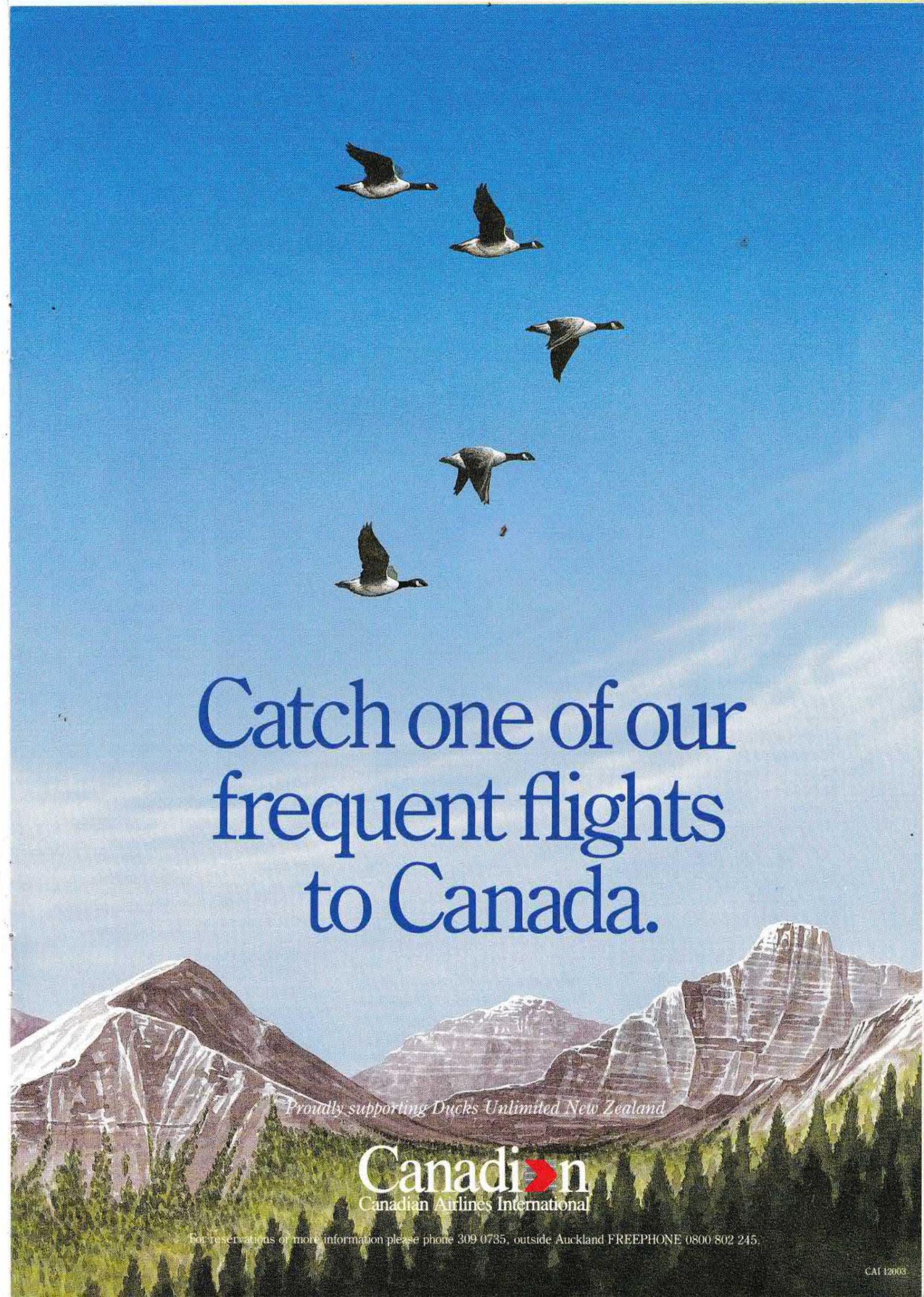
adapted to wetland life can also be found there. Even by concentrating on just freshwater wetlands, the number of birds that can be encountered is staggering, especially when it is taken into account that, for its size, New Zealand has a much reduced range of bird species.

Lake Wairarapa is one of the largest freshwater wetland complexes still remaining in the country. It is situated in the southern reaches of the Wairarapa in the south of the North Island and, in the decade between 1974 and 1984, no fewer than 80 species were recorded using the wetland's habitats. Of these, 57 were considered to be species who were predominantly found in wetlands, while 23 were species who mostly chose other habitats but were able to survive as part of the fabric of wetland life. In contrast some of the best remaining pieces of native bush support a total of only 35-40 species of birds.

While some species do not move very far from the place where they were hatched and reared, others provide the best New Zealand examples of the marvel of migration both within New Zealand and between New Zealand and the Northern Hemisphere. Still other species illustrate periodic wanderings which make the scope and duration of their journey almost impossible to detect.

However, they all clearly indicate that wetlands must not be seen as islands of habitat surrounded by a sea of other inhospitable habitats providing barriers to movement. Instead wetlands must be seen as interconnecting networks of habitats which exist at a range of different levels of scale, much like stepping stones of infinite shape and form.

When viewed this way it is clear that wetland networks must be maintained at local levels, regional levels, national levels and at the international level if the great range and diversity of birds which call wetlands home are going to be conserved for our future generations which are yet to learn to appreciate the wonders they contain. Diversity is not only the spice of life it also contains the very essence of life.



BROWN TEAL BACK TO THE HOKIANGA HARBOUR

Over recent years, Ducks Unlimited's releases of Brown Teal into the wild have been concentrating on an attempt to halt the decline of the birds in the Northland region, which is the species last stronghold on the New Zealand mainland. This strategy was initially coupled with the New Zealand Wildlife Service's habitat protection programme which saw a large number of the bird's traditional roostsites fenced off from grazing stock and replanted with various species of plants suited to the coastal environment.

The focus point for the release of captive reared birds was chosen to be the Mimiwhangata Farm Park where two large lagoons were created

as release sites. Scattered throughout the park is a wide range of other smaller farm ponds which offer suitable breeding habitat of pairs for birds once they dispersed away from the initial release site. However, history has shown that while a population of birds could be temporarily established in this type of habitat, the highly modified agricultural landscape is not conducive to the long term survival and successful breeding of Brown Teal.

Our research has shown that captive bred birds were released at the same weight as their wild cousins, the same number of males and females made up the releases and that after release the birds were able to successfully form pair bonds, mate, nest, hatch and rear ducklings. However, the simple fact was that the rate of breeding success for the released birds was not sufficiently high enough to sustain the population, even though the birds

**Grant Dumbell
DUNZ Executive Director**



Brown Teal release

could survive for several years. Subsequent research clarified that the birds were highly susceptible to predation once they left the relative safety of the release site and while the smaller ponds were able to provide adequate breeding habitat, the damage seemed to be done while the birds were feeding at night on open grass. The single biggest culprit appeared to be ferrets.

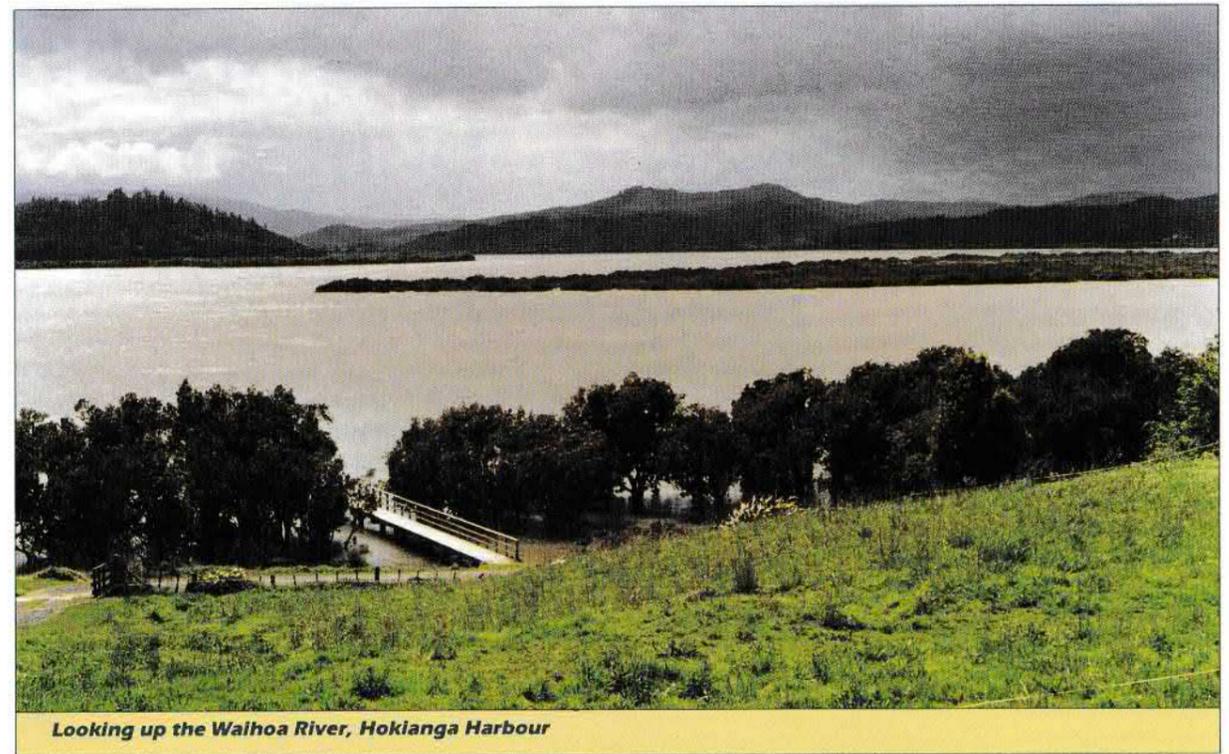
By visiting the various roost-sites used by Brown Teal in Northland, and comparing the type of habitat they use with the habitat used by the Brown Teal populations on Great Barrier Island, you are left with the distinct impression that many of the so called safe Northland sites are in fact unsafe and are being gradually encroached upon by coastal development and the general increase of human pressures common to most of our coastline. The largest Brown Teal sites in Northland are to be found in the remotest places and it is deep within the

Whangaruru Harbour that lies the final jewel in the Brown Teal's mainland crown.

As a result, last summer, Dave Johnston and myself started looking for a similar place where we could begin to release Brown Teal. This site had to mimic as many of the features of the Whangaruru Harbour and Great Barrier Island as possible. It had to be reasonably remote, and it had to have the potential to provide the birds with feeding, breeding and survival opportunities which were not available in a farm type environment. Most of all, it had to be away from the existing populations of Brown Teal as a release of captive bred birds into an

existing population, masks not only the success of the release, it also masks the natural changes in the original population.

This search led us to the Hokianga Harbour on the west coast of Northland. The most encouraging point about the Hokianga was that Brown Teal could be found there as recently as the 1970's and there are persistent reports of birds still being seen in the river catchments that flow into the head of the harbour. This pattern of stragglers holding on for many years after large groups of birds have disappeared is a common occurrence with Brown Teal and points to the area still being able to support the species. While it is often argued that unless the factors which caused the original decline of a population can be shown to have been controlled, it is not worth trying to reintroduce a species, in the case of Brown Teal, there is no clear evidence to show what those original



Looking up the Waihoa River, Hokianga Harbour

decline factors were. Therefore, in the absence of this information the only way to find out if they can still survive is to give it a go.

Dave and I chose the very upper reaches of the Hokianga as our search area as the topographical maps of the area suggested that is where we might find what we were looking for. Then last March we spent several days in the area with the Ducks Unlimited punt which DowElanco had donated to us specifically for this type of work and we systematically searched the mangroves, streams, tidal inlets and backwaters not only looking for a suitable release site, but also for any elusive Brown Teal which may still have been lurking there.

The Hokianga Harbour is a long narrow gash that runs inland from the Tasman Sea at Omapere and Opononi, (the home of Opo the Dolphin), for over 25 kilometres. It is fringed with mangroves and has many small creeks and tidal inlets nestled in the surrounding hills. At its upper reaches the tide is almost closer to the east coast that it is to the west, and on its twice daily journey down the harbour it squeezes through an area called The Narrows. Above this point the harbour can become tide blocked on a big tide and this leads to unbelievable tidal rips and standing waves as the tide goes out. It is almost as if somebody has pulled

the plug from a giant bath, and Dave and I were there during last year's equinoxial king tides. Accordingly we had to start each day's work by taking the boat up the harbour on the incoming tide and coming back down on the outgoing tide. It was simply impossible to try to go against the flow.

At its head, two large rivers flow into the harbour, the Mangamuka and the Waihou. While the Mangamuka drains hillier country and doesn't have extensive tidal flats, the Waihou does, and on the southern side of the river we found what we were looking for. To traverse from the harbour to the rough farmland on the flats you cross through an extensive band of mature mangroves which have large areas of salt marsh behind them. Then as the ground dries out, rushes can be found scattered through the pasture areas suggesting that winter drainage is not what it could be. This is ideal brown teal habitat. Throughout the area you can find large clumps of cutty grass and tangles of vegetation and this is great nesting cover. The mangroves are also dissected by networks of drainage channels carved out the tide's comings and goings and these provide roosting habitat similar to what is seen elsewhere in Northland.

The actual release of birds did not occur until October when I went north with a

group of 54 birds safely housed in their transport crates. With the inevitable Spring farm work Dave was unable to make this second trip so I was accompanied by Sally Haynes who is from The Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust in Britain and was touring New Zealand. On the way we were able to arrange to give the New Zealand Herald an interview on this new twist in Operation Pateke and as a result the release featured on the front page of the paper. We would

GIMPEX GRAIN DISPENSERS

The first grain FEEDER only feeding out when activated by YOUR birds! No loss of grain to rats and sparrows, low cost feeding in all conditions year round, great success on poultry and game farms in New Zealand. Will adapt to any bird numbers without alteration. GIMPEX GRAIN DISPENSERS are suitable for chicks from one week on and older, ducks, pheasants and partridge. GIMPEX "ready to use" FEEDERS have large 20 litre rainproof containers with strong handles. GIMPEX DISPENSERS are for self-mounting onto other systems.

GIMPEX COMPLETE FEEDER \$41.30 inc GST add \$6 P/P. GIMPEX DISPENSER "ONLY" \$27.00 inc GST add \$4 P/P. For free information please write to GIMPEX NZ 326 No 1 Road RD2 Te Puke. LET GIMPEX HELP YOU TO THE LIMIT

also have had television coverage if it wasn't for the Air Force crashing a plane into the mangroves further north of the Hokianga.

At the release site we were met by Ray Pierce from the Department of Conservation. Ray is the Conservancy Advisory Scientist for the Department's Northland conservancy and was able to provide an extra pair of hands for the job of sexing, colour banding and recording the birds details as they were released, a job that still took nearly three hours. As each bird was released it quietly slipped away in the surrounding vegetation and when we had finished there was nothing to suggest there were 54 very rare waterfowl in the area.

Once the birds had all been liberated we placed small piles of food pellets in the vicinity as the diet change from captivity to the wild is potentially the most traumatic change the birds have to make. On returning to the release site the following day we were pleased to see that every pile had been disturbed and the presence of

waterfowl droppings showed that the birds had been feeding.

An unwelcome sign was the body of one of the birds which had been caught out in the open by a Harrier and, while this was a result we did not want to find, we took encouragement from the fact that the unlucky bird did not appear to have been killed by a cat or a ferret. We do know that newly released birds are unaware of the dangers of predators, however, we also know that Brown Teal respond to predator alarm calls given by Pukekos, so that is another skill they have to learn. After making an extensive search of the area we did not see a bird which indicated they were making the most of the thick cover. We replenished their supplementary food and left them to get on with their new lives.

The first month after release is the most important time as it is during this time that the birds have to learn to survive on their own. After this period, released birds have the potential to survive as well as wild bred birds so I will be going back to the

Hokianga later this summer to look for the 53 remaining needles in the haystack. We will also be wanting to hear from the local residents who may see birds throughout the summer as this is the time when birds may be seen roosting on fallen branches and overhanging streambanks.

This shift in release strategy will not only involve the use of more estuarine areas of habitat, such as that found in the Hokianga Harbour, it will also involve releases of small groups of birds onto a range of offshore islands. The identification of these islands will be a job that we will tackle during 1994 and by the end of the year we are confident that we will have liberated Brown Teal onto at least one or two new islands, as well as further releases of birds into the Hokianga. By continuing to prospect for better release sites, which give the birds a greater chance of success, we will be doing the best for the future of the Brown Teal and the ultimate success of Operation Pateke.

BANDING BRANTA IN THE WAIMARINO

For the last four years, on Wellington Anniversary weekend, members of Ducks Unlimited, Taranaki Fish and Game Council and, in some years, local Department of Conservation officers, have got together to catch, band and release Canada Geese as part of an ongoing study into the movements and population spread of this magnificent bird. January 23, 1994 was no exception.

This annual event captures the essence of what Ducks Unlimited's waterfowl work is all about - field work, handling wildfowl, contributing expertise to the management of a species, and getting wet and sunburnt.

In the Waimarino area near Ohakune there are two or three major dams that are moulting sites for Canada Geese. This area hosts one of the breeding areas in the North Island and flights Canada Geese are not an uncommon sight on the horizon. Once the large congregation of birds have been found, it is essential, when setting up for the banding, not to disturb the birds on the water as they are invariably close enough to watch us setting up the pens that will be used to capture the birds.

It takes most of the day to set up the pens at the edge of the water. A spot is chosen where the birds can easily exit the water without having to fly. At this time of year, theoretically, the birds should be unable to fly due to the moult although we have witnessed otherwise in the past! The pens we have used (C/- Taranaki Fish & Game Council) are simply a circle of metal cyclone wire "gates" standing upright and tied to warratah's with a narrow entrance

Carolyn Hooson

way, the width of a gate, right on the shore of the water. The idea behind the gates is that the birds can see through them and are not alarmed as they would be if using a solid wall. If they can see the grass and hills in the distance they think they are simply walking onto the shores of the lagoon and not into a pen.

A roof for the pen is formed with mesh netting. Our first banding operation was hampered by birds being able to jump and

then there is a lull in activity while lunch takes place. This also helps settle the birds after all the disturbance before the afternoon catchup.

The pen is ready. Now all we have to do is get the birds into it. Herding the geese is a very delicate and critical operation, as you only get one chance. Care must be taken not to spook the birds and cause the flappers to flap, or for those that can, to fly away. Boats and canoes set off and encircle the birds until they can position themselves on the other side of the mob while one or two people swimming in the water can

form a line to keep all the birds moving at the same pace. Other people walking along the shores to form a line right across the water and to gently push the birds towards the pen. At this stage some birds start to fly as paradise ducks, mallards and greys depart leaving the swan and geese a little agitated but still moving.

As the birds near the pen, the first ones climb out of the water toward the opening, the others following. This now calls for critical timing. Someone has

fly out of the pen so the addition of this roof made for a total enclosure.

To guide the birds into the pen, a wing is extended from the pen out into the water with wire netting is attached to it.

Long bamboo poles are erected along the wire and tied on to give extra support. The wire netting is fed out from a boat and hangs below the tensioned wire into the water to prevent diving birds escaping when they are herded into the pen.

Setting up takes most of the morning,

to move up to the pen just as the last few birds are going in to close the opening. There are always some birds that get away and invariably there are other species such as paradise ducks and black swan which are caught up amongst them.

The ducks need to be freed quickly as the birds are all huddled in the pen and trying to get out the other end and small openings under the gates provide an easy exit for them to escape.

Once all the smaller birds are out and the geese are getting to know each other



Director Chris Hooson with a co-operative Canada goose.



DUCKS UNLIMITED NEW ZEALAND INC. 20th Annual Conference 15-17 July 1994 at the Coachman Hotel, Palmerston North

Conference Registration

Please Register people for the Ducks Unlimited Conference

Name

Address

Phone

I/We will require accommodation for the nights of

Number in party

Conference Registration: \$55 each x People = \$

Coachman Motel Room (\$85 deposit): \$85 per room x rooms = \$

Coachman Hotel Room (\$112.50 deposit): \$112.50 per room x rooms = \$

Please charge my VISA/BANKCARD No. Expiry Date / /

Signature My cheque for \$ is enclosed

Please send your registration to: **DIANE PRITT, Smiths Road, Ohakune**
Phone: 0-6-385 8016 a/h or 0-6-385 8244 Wk

Please Note: Confirmation required by 25th May

more intimately it is about now that all those involved in setting up the operation need another well deserved break. This gives the birds another opportunity to settle as there can be up to 150 birds caught in a successful roundup.

The banding operation begins with two or three people gathering birds and handling them to the sexer. As the birds need to be upside down in order to identify it's sex, the claws of the goose are sometimes flailing about, scratching the arms and anything else that gets in the way. Geese have exceptionally strong legs with stubby, sharp claws and this part of the operation can be painful. There is a knack to getting the bird upside down, however it is made easier by tucking the bird's head under its wing which instantly calms it down.

As the metal band is fitted, the number on the band is recorded along with the information the on bird's sex and age. The bands are placed around the leg of the bird - left leg for females and right leg for males then the bird is released, non too fussed about the experience.

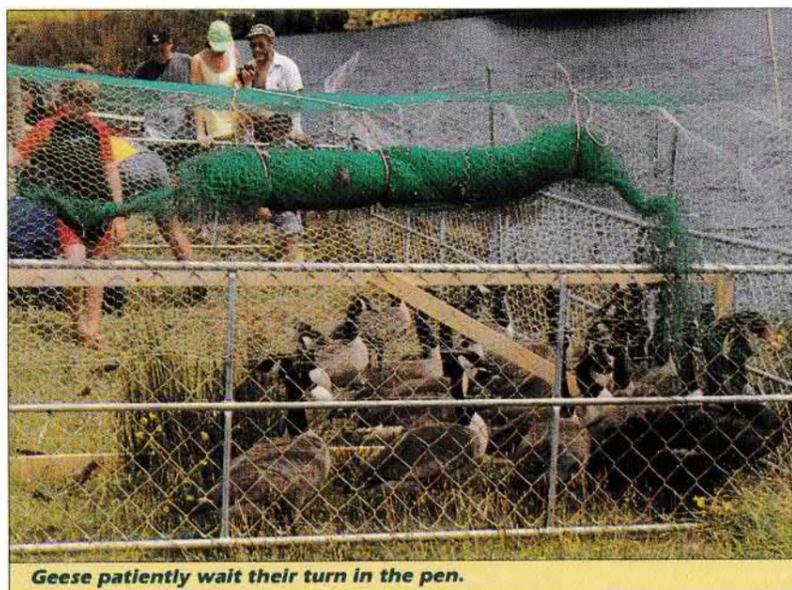
Some birds captured have been captured before so have a band on them

from a previous year. These band numbers are also noted and recorded as their history indicates how old the bird is, when and where it was first banded.

It can take all afternoon to get through 100 or more birds as accuracy is the key to ensuring the information is correct. Once all the birds are banded and released the last job is to dismantle the pen. This is definitely

where many hands make light work and although it doesn't take as long as setting up, it feels it after a long and tiring day.

This annual event is a wonderful opportunity to get close to these beautiful birds and is a very rewarding experience to take part in. Roll on Wellington Anniversary 1995.



Geese patiently wait their turn in the pen.

BEAUTIFY YOUR WETLANDS WITH TREES
 - MANY VARIETIES
 - TREES FOR BIRDS
 - TREES FOR SWAMPS
 - WHOLESALE PRICES

Freighted anywhere in N.Z. for your convenience
 Send for your free price list from:

Nick NELSON PARKER

CHEDDAR VALLEY NURSERY
 R.D.2, OPOTIKI
 PH (07) 312-4639

WE SUPPORT WATERFOWL AND WETLANDS

SPORTWAYS GUNSHED LTD

49 NORMANBY ROAD
 MT EDEN
 AUCKLAND
 Phone 09 631 5275, 09 638 7279

AUCKLAND CHAPTER NEWS

John Bell

Auckland members will have received a newsletter outlining the chapter's plans for the busy summer period. The annual Dinner/Auction will be held on Friday, March 25 at Sarmajaz in Takanini. Members will remember the very enjoyable evening which this venue provided for us at our 1993 dinner, and this year we are hoping to have a well known and entertaining guest speaker in attendance.

The dinner will be preceded by a sporting clay shoot at Waiuku on March 13. For any members from outside of the Auckland region who would like to participate in this event, please contact the chapter through P.O. Box 9795, Newmarket, Auckland. We will send you all the necessary details.

The chapter is also planning to mount displays about Ducks Unlimited's conservation work at both the Kumeu Show on March 5 and at the Waitemata Fish and Game Society Mini Game Fair to be held at Muriwai on February 27. By attending both these shows we are confident that we can achieve a major boost for Ducks Unlimited profile in the Auckland region.

EKETAHUNA CHAPTER NEWS

Howard Egan

Three attractive fluffy ducks serving mulled wine, displaying auction items and selling bucket raffle tickets were a feature of Eketahuna's major fundraiser held in Masterton at the end of September. With over eighty members and friends present the evening raised \$6250 for wetland and waterfowl projects.

Two clay bird shoots have also been held during the year and a field trip is planned for Sunday February 20th. Members will visit the Hidden Lakes area and then barbecue in the freshly mowed hay paddock of Ted and Glenys Hansen at Matahiwi. This will give an ideal opportunity to view the ongoing wetland creation and enhancement being undertaken by Ted and Glenys.

MANAWATU CHAPTER NEWS

Ken Cook

Our Annual Dinner/Auction was most enjoyable and may rate as one of our best yet. Catering was first class and with the

large variety of game dishes prepared by our members, the meal was something to remember. The guest speaker for the evening was Dr John Cockram from Massey University who spoke on his work on Grey Duck breeding and hybridisation, a very informative and humorous address. The silent auction was open throughout the evening and the main auction was the usual great form of entertainment with some beautiful items from DU Canada.

Chapter members were very busy with "The Great DU Cabbage Tree Dig" which is mentioned elsewhere in this issue, however, this event was later followed by a further donation of trees from the Palmerston North Parks and Reserves Nursery who were cleaning out as a result of their relocation to a new site. Our thanks must go to Alan Fielding who was instrumental in coordinating all of our recent horticultural activities.

PROGRESS WITH SUBANTARCTIC TEAL CONSERVATION

The National Wildlife Centre at Mt Bruce has been encouraged by breeding success with Auckland Island Teal using an open enclosure situation. The season's result of four ducklings indicates strong support for holding Campbell Island Teal pairs together in an enclosure with open social interaction. A 20 metre x 23 metre enclosure was constructed for the experiment.

The Centre's Annual Report says, "The enclosure is being designed to replicate teal habitat as closely as possible with dense, diverse planting and landscaping - ponds, seepages, bolders, logs, tussocks, bog plants, aquatic plants - to provide security and shelter and to encourage a rich diverse invertebrate population. A feature of the new enclosure is the construction of an elevated observation hide from which we can closely monitor the interactions between the birds. Campbell Island Teal are the top priority for the Centre in the coming year."

LIFE MEMBER PINS COMPLETED

Ducks Unlimited has just completed the manufacture and distribution of its own unique Life Member pin. These pins feature the new DUNZ logo and have been manufactured in sterling silver, highlighted with gold plating. The design of the pins follows the standards set by both DU Inc

and DU Canada and this brings DUNZ into line with the rest of the international DU family with respect to the recognition that we are able to give to our larger contributors. The Board of Directors are also finalising policy to guide the appropriate recognition of contributors and sponsors who are able to support us at levels above Life Membership. Details of this will be announced in a later issue of "Flight."

FUNDING RECEIVED FROM MINISTRY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Ducks Unlimited has been successful in the latest round of funding applications for Environmental Grants from the Ministry for the Environment. MFE has granted us \$1000 to assist with the further development of our Grey Teal nest box programme, and this will form part of our programme for the New Year.

WELCOME TO A NEW LIFE MEMBER

As a result of a recent visit to New Zealand, Gary Harrigan from Reno Nevada, USA, has become our newest Life Member. Gary met up with William Abel during his stay, during which time he also married his finance Yvonne, and enjoyed a whirlwind tour of some of the Wairarapa wetlands. We look forward to seeing Gary and Yvonne again in the future, and wish them all the best for their lives together.

EVENT CALENDAR 1994

- February 20** - Eketahuna Chapter field trip to Hidden Lakes then barbeque at Matahiwi. Contact: Glenys Hansen 0-6-375 8474
- February 27** - Ducks Unlimited Auckland Chapter at Waitemata Fish & Game Fair Murawai
- March 5** - Ducks Unlimited Auckland Chapter at Kumeu show
- March 13** - Auckland Chapter Sporting Clay shoot Waiuku. Contact: Auckland Chapter, PO Box 9795, Newmarket
- March 25** - Auckland Chapter Annual Dinner & Auction at Sarmajaz, Takanini, Auckland. Contact: David Smith 0-9-292 8873
- July 15-17** - 20th Ducks Unlimited Annual Conference, The Coachman Hotel, Palmerston North. Contact: Di Pitt 0-6-385 8016
- March 27** - Wellington Chapter lunch at The Lodge, Pauatahanui Inlet. Contact: William Abel 0-4-566 9722

**DUNZ ASKED TO HELP
MADAGASCAN TEAL**

The Madagascan Teal is an extremely rare species of duck from Madagascar, off the coast of Africa. It is thought to be related to both the Brown Teal and the Grey Teal in a group of ducks called the Austral Teal. The conservation of this bird involves a captive breeding programme which is being developed by Gerald Durrell's Jersey Zoo in the Channel Islands and Ducks Unlimited is pleased to be able to offer the benefit of our experiences with breeding Brown Teal and providing nesting boxes for Grey Teal.

**RED-BREASTED GESE
REMOVED FROM
THREAT**

The Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust have reported that Red-breasted geese can be removed from the list of globally threatened wildfowl following a survey coordinated by the Trust.

In January this year, WWT undertook a survey of the wintering grounds of the Red-breasted geese in Bulgaria and Romania, in collaboration with the Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds, the Romanian Ornithological Society and the National Environmental Research Institute of Denmark. The team found a staggering 75,000 geese, a far higher number than the previous population estimate of 35,000.

**DU MEETS MINISTER
OF CONSERVATION**

In September, Ducks Unlimited Executive Director Dr Grant Dumbell along with Alan Wilks met with the Minister of Conservation, The Honourable Denis Marshall, to express concern at the slow progress with the development of the Brown Teal Recovery Plan, the rewriting of the Blue Duck Recovery Plan and the development of the Department of Conservation's policy with respect to the captive breeding of threatened species.

Since that meeting there has been rapid progress with the Brown Teal plan and the Department has called for submissions on the Blue Duck plan. To have both of these plans completed is crucial for Ducks Unlimited as the further development of both Operation Pateke and Operation Whio is dependent on having these recovery plans in place. The Department of Conservation has indicated that both of these plans will be ready for final approval

before the end of the current financial year next June.

**THANKS TO
CANADIAN AIRLINES**

Canadian Airlines have again provided free air freight to transport a donated consignment of fundraising items from Canada to New Zealand. These items will appear at our 1994 dinners, including next year's Annual Conference. Thanks to Al Cromb from Edmonton who donated the items to us, and thanks to Steven Rice of Canadian Airlines who arranged the transport.

**WATERFOWL
HAZARDS**

Lead poisoning of waterfowl is a serious environmental problem throughout Europe, North America and Australia. This is caused by waterfowl eating spent shotgun pellets discharged into marshes and sooner or later, dying from the toxic effects.

**MAJOR AUSTRALASIAN
EVENT**

A global wetland campaign is being proposed for 1996, to mark the 25 Anniversary Convention of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention. The organising body is the International Waterfowl and Wetland Research Bureau

based in England, who were the prime movers in the design and implementation of the Ramsar Convention. The 1996 Convention will be held in Australia, the first time that the Contracting Parties will have met in Oceania.

**1993 DUCKS
UNLIMITED
NATIONAL RAFFLE
RESULTS****Graham Gurr - Raffle Organiser**

Here are the official results for this year's national raffle, which was drawn on 15 October.

1st Prize	M. Craigie	Upper Hutt
2nd Prize	R.M. Clay	Auckland
3rd Prize	M. Mason	Palmerston North
4th Prize	I. Gray	Masterton
5th Prize	L. Bryant	Masterton
6th Prize	G. Garshaw	Waiuku

Congratulations to all the winners and many thanks to everyone who purchased a ticket. Better luck in next year's raffle.

Special thanks to all our prize sponsors who include:

Flexiplan Holidays
Kambrook New Zealand Ltd
Neville Newcomb Reprographics Ltd
Sunley Pharmacy

THE GREAT DU CABBAGE TREE DIG

Alan Fielding



This extraordinary fundraising event took place at Murray's Nurseries at Woodville on the 18th of September when members from the Manawatu and Wellington Chapters met to remove about 2000 young cabbage trees from the soil. These trees, along with a later donation of swamp cypress, kahikatea, common alder, holm oak, flax and pin oak had been donated to Ducks Unlimited by Murray's Nursery and were sold to members before, after and during the Eketahuna and Manawatu Chapter dinner/auctions.

Ducks Unlimited sincerely appreciate the generosity of Murray's Nurseries in Woodville for the donation of these trees. Wetlands all over the lower part of the North Island will be the richer for it.

NATIONAL SALES ITEMS

BOOKS

Duckshooters: Sportsmen & Conservationists	20.00
Complete Book Australian Birds (Readers Digest)	85.00
Coloured Key to the Waterfowl of the World	14.50
New Zealand Birds	11.30
The Hawaiian Goose	25.50
Ponds and Lakes for Wildfowl	54.00
Wildfowl by Eric Hosking	50.00
Wetlands by Gordon Stephenson	15.00
NZ Wetlands: A Management Guide	25.00

APPAREL

DU Hat Flouro/Black (one size fits all)	15.00
DU polo Shirt - White only	30.00
Stirling Silver Duckhead Pendant	45.00

FINE ART PRINTS

Mallards - Janet Marshall	65.00
Shovelers - Russell Jackson	65.00
"Whio" - Paul Martinson	65.00
Grey Teal - Lex Hedley	65.00
"Pateke" - Pauline Morse	65.00

10% DISCOUNT

off

Roll Bag _ \$21.00

Order through Sales Dept

BADGES

DU Decal	1.00
DU Canada 50th Anniversary Badge	5.60
DU Duck Head Badge - Large Gold	6.75
DU Duck Head Badge - Small Gold/White & Green	5.60
DU Duck Head Stick Pin	5.60

STATIONERY

DU Maxipens - per box	13.00
DU Maxipens - single	1.50

GENERAL

Bait Stations (incl. 2 baits)	25.00
Fenn Traps Mk 6	36.00
DU Cam-O-Paint	10.00
Engraved Crystal Decanter	50.00
Roll Bag	24.00
Camo Back Pack	36.00

I ENCLOSE MY CHEQUE FOR \$ IN PAYMENT OR
PLEASE CHARGE TO MY VISA/BANKCARD
(Delete to suit)

CARD NO EXPIRY DATE

NAME (Please print)

ADDRESS

POST TO DIANE PRITT, SMITHS ROAD
OHAKUNE 0-6-385 8016
BUSINESS HOUSE: TAX INVOICE REQUIRED n (Tick)