



MORE THAN A NAME. A LEGEND.



The Thompson's well established and secluded pond, south of Auckland. Photo: Graham Gurr.

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

Flight

OCTOBER
1996

ISSUE 89



DUCKS UNLIMITED NEW ZEALAND INC.

For Wetlands and Waterfowl.

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Thomas Williams III, U.S.A.
Mr W.D. Wright, U.S.A.

INSIGHT

Alan Wilks

President

I take pleasure in welcoming two directors to the board, both from the Waikato. Dale Stevens and Craig Worth were elected at the AGM and both have considerable business management experience, Dale as General Manager of Rural Post, and Craig with his own company. Craig has been a member since 1975 and follows his father, Jack, who served as a director from the establishment of DU. Is this what is meant by the DU family?

It is with sorrow that I record that Ian Lyver did not seek nomination to continue as a director. Ian was a board member for three years and, in addition to his valuable accountancy skills, his contribution to meetings will be missed by us all.

By the time you receive this "Flight" tenders for the Pearce Wetlands will have closed. The property was advertised during August and September and tender documents were requested by a surprisingly large number of individuals and organisations. If we accept a tender, and conclude a sale, we will look forward to being able to invest in further wetland conservation.

As you will be aware by now, my main aim during my term as President is to increase membership. I intend to mention this in every Insight I write to keep you up to date with our progress towards our goal of 2700 members.

We are about to commence the trials for a major recruitment programme which we have funded through generous donations received from our Life and Sponsor Members who have given us their support. Our plan is to conduct a series of direct mailings to the rural sector using a specially designed brochure.

Initially, we will produce 10,000 brochures and will deliver them to a cross section of farmers and rural residents on 16 rural deliveries in both chapter and non chapter areas. These trials will allow us to judge which type of R.D. is the most effective, and will hopefully foreshadow a much larger full scale programme. Our break even response rate is only 1.2%, and we are confident we will have positive news in the next issue of "Flight".

The board has also begun investigating the establishment of three new chapters. We have identified key members in potential areas and are working with them to get the ball rolling. I will keep you informed of our progress.



OUR MISSION

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

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

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

Cover Photo: Canadian Geese about to land. Photo Scott Neilsen.

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Vice President: Graham Gurr, Auckland
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Treasurer: Glenys Hansen, Eketahuna
Directors: William Abel, Wellington
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PEARCE WETLANDS MANAGEMENT PLAN

We have been advised by the Queen Elizabeth II National Trust that the management plan for the Pearce Wetlands has now been approved by the Board of Trustees. This plan is a requirement of the Open Space Covenant and is the last piece in the puzzle to complete the job of giving perpetual protection to the Pearce Wetlands.

Ducks Unlimited is extremely grateful to John Bishop from the QEII National Trust who has freely provided his wealth of land management experience to assist us with the formulation and approval of the plan. If any member would like to receive a copy of the plan, please contact us at P.O. Box 9795, Newmarket, Auckland.

BLUE DUCK TRANSFERRED TO AUCKLAND ZOO

After a month in quarantine, a pair of Blue Duck were released into the huge free-flight aviary at Auckland Zoo during August. These birds have been housed by Ron Munro for the last several years, but have not yet bred. As Ron had two pairs of Blue Duck, there was the possibility that their close proximity may prevent both pairs from breeding, so the older pair were moved north where hopefully the new surroundings will stimulate them to breed. While there are other waterfowl in the aviary, there are no other Blue Ducks nearby.

The release was undertaken by David Smith, "Operation Whio" Project Supervisor, and Martin Bell from the zoo, in front of newspaper and television reporters. We were also pleased to have a representative from DowElanco present following their significant sponsorship of "Operation Whio" as featured in this issue of "Flight".

BLUE DUCK TO BE SENT TO UK

"Operation Whio" has recently received an export authority from the Department of Conservation to transfer three male Blue Duck to the Wildfowl and Wetlands

Trust in Britain. WWT have had Blue Duck since 1986 when two pairs were transferred to the UK to establish the birds in the largest collection of waterfowl in the world, and to provide an international safe haven for Blue Ducks should anything catastrophic happen here in New Zealand. Over the past 10 years WWT have successfully bred Blue Duck on a number of occasions.

Through the work that DU has now done to understand the family histories of the Blue Duck in captivity it has become apparent that of the two pairs which were sent to Britain, the two males were brothers. As a result, the international captive management programme would be doomed to eventually suffer from inbreeding depression should no further genetic stock be available to provide outcrosses for the UK birds.

We are currently working with Tony Richardson from WWT to carry out this transfer before the end of the year to allow the males to acclimatise in Britain before the start of the northern hemisphere breeding season sometime after March. The transfer will not significantly impact the New Zealand captive management programme as we currently hold a surplus of male birds, including full brothers of the birds which will travel to the UK.

BROWN TEAL FUNDING

Ducks Unlimited has been successful with its application to the Lotteries Commission for funds to undertake a survey of the Chatham Islands to ascertain their suitability as a release site for an attempt to reestablish a population of Brown Teal. The Chatham Islands were home to Brown Teal until early this century, however they became extinct sometime around 1910.

A visit to the islands is being planned for this summer to look for suitable habitat and to consult with the local community. If a release is feasible, an application for funding to undertake a series of releases



David Smith and Martin Bell with the pair of Blue Duck now resident at Auckland Zoo.
Photo: Grant Dumbell

will then be made. Once funding is in hand, an application will be made to transfer birds to the islands for release.

U.S. WETLAND BIOLOGISTS VISIT

During June, DU was able to host a visit by 30 wetland biologists and partners from the United States. This visit was led by Dr Alan Wentz, DU Inc's Director of Conservation from head office in Memphis, Tennessee. The programme was arranged through an international exchange visit organisation and travel was coordinated by Thomas Cook.

We handled all the programme arrangements, which included two half days of seminars featuring speakers from DUNZ, DoC, Auckland/Waikato Fish and Game Council, Miranda Naturalists Trust and the Manukau Harbour Protection Society. A number of the visitors also spoke of their work in the US, including wetland restoration projects in Hawaii. Time was also spent on field visits which included parts of the Manukau Harbour, the Firth of Thames and the Whangamarino Wetland. A trip to Tiritiri Matangi Island had to be cancelled and replaced with an overview of the Kaipara Harbour, due to bad weather.

Following the three day programme Alan Wentz and Andy Engilis from DU Inc's Western Regional office in Sacramento, California, stayed on to meet the DU board and, accompanied by our Executive

Director, met with both DoC and the NZ Fish and Game Council.

Alan and Andy returned to the US for some summer weather, and missed the Mt Ruapehu fireworks by just one week - the third time that Alan's presence during a visit to an area has preceded major geologic activity. Thankfully the other two times happened in North America.

WETLANDS INTERNATIONAL

The International Waterfowl and Wetlands Research Bureau (IWRB), the Asian Wetland Bureau (AWB) and Wetlands for the Americas (WA) have consolidated and joined forces under the one name of Wetlands International. The formation of Wetlands International draws together and builds upon the strengths and achievements of these three founding



Some of the Citizen Ambassador wetland delegates enjoying the winter sunshine on a visit to the Whangamarino wetland. Photo: Grant Dumbell

organisations, which date back more than 40 years.

Created in October 1995 and launched at the February 1996 International Conference on Wetlands and Development in Malaysia, Wetlands International is a non-profit organisation governed by a global Board, comprising representatives of 45 member countries, international organisations and wetlands specialists.

The basic mission of the organisation is "To sustain and restore wetlands, their resources and biodiversity for future generations through research, information exchange and conservation activities worldwide."

Ducks Unlimited has been a member of IWRB for a number of years and while New Zealand is not a member country, you can become involved by contacting Wetlands International directly c/- IWRB, Slimbridge, Gloucester GL2 7BX, England, Fax 0044-1453-890697.

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

An abridged version of the audited Ducks Unlimited annual financial statements for the year to 31 March 1996 is printed on page 6. Should any member wish to receive a complete set of accounts, please write to P.O. Box 9795, Newmarket, Auckland. We apologise for the lateness of their publication.

1995/96 ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

EASTWOOD BOURKE Chartered Accountants

AUDIT REPORT To the Members of Ducks Unlimited New Zealand Incorporated

We have audited the Financial Statements on pages 1 - 9.

The Financial Statements provide information about the past financial performance of the Society and its financial position as at 31 March 1996. This information is stated in accordance with the accounting policies set out on page 10.

Board Members Responsibilities

The committee of Board Members is responsible for the preparation of Financial Statements which give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Society as at 31 March 1996 and of the results of operations and cash flows for the year ended 31 March 1996.

Auditors' Responsibilities

It is our responsibility to express an independent opinion on the Financial Statements presented by the committee and report our opinion to you.

Basis of Opinion

An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the Financial Statements. It also includes assessing:

- the significant estimates and judgements made by the committee in the preparation of the Financial Statements, and
- whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Society's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We conducted our audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards in New Zealand. We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the Financial Statements are free from material mis-statements, whether caused by fraud or error. In forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the Financial Statements.

We have not audited the membership records.

Qualified Opinion

The Society's activities included cash fund-raising. There is no system of control over which we can rely for the purpose of our audit and there are no satisfactory audit procedures that we could adopt to confirm independently that all cash fund-raising was properly recorded.

Other than in this respect we have received all the information and explanations that we required.

In our opinion:

- proper accounting records have been kept by the Society as far as appears from our examination of those records; and
- the Financial Statements on pages 1 - 9, comply with generally accepted accounting practice; give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Society as at 31 March 1996 and of the results of its operations and cash flows for the year ended on that date.

Our audit was completed on 30 August 1996 and our qualified opinion is expressed as at that date.

(Signed)

Masterton
30 August 1996
Eastwood Bourke
Chartered Accountants

DUCKS UNLIMITED NEW ZEALAND INCORPORATED

Accounting Policies & Notes to Accounts
For the Year Ended 31 March 1996

1. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES:

- 1.1 Reporting Entity**
Ducks Unlimited New Zealand Incorporated is an incorporated Society. These Financial Statements have been prepared in accordance with the Framework for Differential Reporting issued by the New Zealand Society of Accountants.
- 1.2 Measurement Base**
The measurement base adopted is historical cost. Accrual accounting is used to match expenses and revenues.
- 1.3 Specific Accounting Policies**
 - 1.3.1 Fixed Assets**
Fixed Assets are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation. Depreciation is written off on a straight line basis over the estimated economic life of these assets. The estimated economic lives are as follows:

Buildings	50 years
Equipment & Machinery	5 years
Furniture & Fittings	5 years
 - 1.3.2 Accounts Receivable**
Accounts receivable are stated at expected realisation value.
 - 1.3.3 Stocks on Hand**
Stock on hand for resale has been valued at the lower of cost or net realisation value. Cost has been calculated on a first in first out basis. Stock purchased for operations is expensed when purchased.
 - 1.3.4 G.S.T.**
These Financial Statements have been prepared on a G.S.T. exclusive basis.
 - 1.3.5 Subscriptions**
Subscriptions are accounted for on a cash basis as and when received.
 - 1.3.6 Differential Reporting**
This business qualifies for differential reporting as it is not publicly accountable and there is no separation between the owners and the governing body. Advantage has been taken of all available reporting exemptions.
- 1.4 Changes in Accounting Policies**
There has been a change in Accounting Policy for 1996. Swamp Reserve Funds \$6,228 has been shown as part of Accumulated Funds. Last year the comparable figure \$3,702 was shown as a current liability. This change has no effect on the reported income for 1996.
Other than this change Accounting Policies have been applied on a consistent basis with the previous year.

2. NOTES TO ACCOUNTS:

- 2.1 Term Liabilities**

H.A. Sinclair - \$36,000	
Value of Sinclair Wetlands Property subject to Gifts	90,000
Less Gifts Made	(54,000)
Balance on Demand Interest Free	\$36,000
- 2.2 N.Z. Waterfowl and Wetlands Trust - \$64,500**
Advance on demand @ 10% p.a. represents the sum of the advances made to Ducks Unlimited from New Zealand Waterfowl and Wetlands Trust as part of external debt retirement programme.
- 2.3 Duck Bonds - \$600**
Advances from members interest free. Ducks Unlimited has a commitment to repay 20% of the bonds each year as drawn by ballot at the Annual General Meeting.
- 2.4 BNZ Finance Limited - \$84,000**
Credit facility up to \$100,000 at variable rate of interest (March 1996 11.25%). The facility is for an initial period of two years and is repayable subject to review at least 12 months prior to maturity. It is secured by way of mortgage on property.
- 2.5 Property Valuations (Distest Govt. Value)**

Pearce Wetlands	\$75,000
Sinclair Wetlands	\$350,000

THE ANDREW DIXON

MacMASTER TROPHY

By Alan Wilks



Brandon Intermediate students at their wetland project. Photo: Alan Wilks

About a third of this area is now covered in flax so several years work still lies ahead. The latest development is the planting of several Kahikatea in the swamp area. Recently, more flax plants and native grasses have been made available to the school and will be planted this season.

During the last few months, we have visited a number of schools in the Manawatu, Wellington and Hawkes Bay areas to assess their wetland associated conservation projects. Without question, the ongoing work that Brandon Intermediate School is involved with at Cannons Creek, Porirua, is worthy of recognition.

Starting from the southern end, which had a small amount of native regrowth, students have filled in spaces and extended the boundaries of this bush for a distance of approximately 400 metres, as well as from the top of the bank to the flats around the edges of the lakes and waterways. Gorse has been spot sprayed and is now almost nonexistent in the area.

On their western boundary a steep bank slopes from the school to the Cannons Creek Lake Reserve and until 10 years ago this was covered in gorse. Since then the school has planted the slopes with native bush.

In 1990 Brandon Intermediate began to develop the wetland, upstream from the lakes, into a flax swamp to improve the aesthetic aspects of the area, reduce much of the silt that was filling the lakes, and provide a resource for local weavers.

The whole area is a credit to Brandon Intermediate, and particularly to staff member John Hodges for his enthusiasm and vision, and it gave Ducks Unlimited great pleasure to award Brandon Intermediate the 1996 Andrew Dixon MacMaster Trophy for a Youth Conservation Project, and to present a cheque for \$360 (US\$250) to further the school's wetland planting programme.

This award was established and is funded by retired American teacher, and DUNZ Life Member, Dr Tony Reiger, in memory of his father-in-law. Tony provided the trophy to encourage student involvement in wetland conservation, and DUNZ is indebted for his support to assist us in conservation education in New Zealand schools.



Last year	\$	\$	\$
	CURRENT ASSETS		
	National Bank of NZ Ltd - Mtuqat		
	Development Account	3,715	
	Operating Account	4,056	
	Term Deposit	33,715	
	Westpac Operating - Masterton	2,236	
	Westpac Imprest - Newmarket	218	
	Accounts Receivable	125	
	Office Supplies on hand	1,830	
	Goods for Resale on hand	7,364	
	GST Refund due	7,497	
			60,766
	FIXED ASSETS		
	Land 125.3ha Pearce Wetlands	110,000	
	Land 31.6ha Sinclair Wetlands	90,000	
	Building Sinclair Wetlands	207,358	
	Furniture & Fittings	1,045	
	Plant & Equipment	3,886	
	Non building wetland development	59,071	
	Video Film	4,917	
			476,277
	TOTAL ASSETS	537,989	537,043
	LESS LIABILITIES		
	CURRENT LIABILITIES		
	Westpac Bank - Eketahuna	3,444	
	Accounts Payable	7,698	
			8,476
			8,476
	TERM LIABILITIES		
	H.A Sinclair Note 2.1	36,000	
	NZ Waterfowl & Wetlands Trust Note 2.2	64,500	
	BNZ Finance Ltd Note 2.4	84,000	
	Duck Bonds Note 2.3	600	
			185,100
	TOTAL LIABILITIES		193,576
	NET ASSETS	367,247	343,467
	Represented by ACCUMULATED FUNDS		
	Opening Balance	337,239	
	Swamp Reserve Funds	6,228	
			343,467
	CLOSING BALANCE		343,467

Last year	\$	\$	\$
REVENUE			
Membership	1,000		
Life	1,000		
Gold Sponsor	1,125		
Silver Sponsor	1,095		
Trade	1,095		
Contributor	15,452		
Junior	290		
		23,057	
Donations & Fundraising	11,661		
Annual Conference Fundraising	1,289		
Annual Conference Registration Profit	3,181		
Memberships	6,085		
National Health Profit	1,865		
Sales Training Profit	2,229		
Flight Advertising	1,849		
Other Income	1,000		
		44,794	
Other Income	23		
Interest Received	1,100		
Life Membership Capital Reserve	1,120		
		3,343	
Grants	145		
Prizes	5,300		
Royal Swan	2,425		
Pearce Wetlands	18,740		
Sinclair Wetlands	66		
		28,381	
			72,181
			72,181
EXPENDITURE			
Management Salaries	2,482		
Advertising & Publicity	751		
Bank Fees	1,117		
Computer Expenses	314		
Freight & Delivery	1,205		
Interest Payable	15,789		
Insurance	2,786		
Printing & Stationery	1,497		
Postage & Firms	1,106		
Professional Fees	131		
Subscriptions	106		
Travel & Board Meetings	1,627		
Stairy	126		
		66,390	
Membership Section	1,888		
Flight Production	19,152		
Recruitment Expenses	429		
Stationery & Postage			21,469
CONSERVATION PROJECTS			
Pearce	1,106		
Royal Swan	700		
Sinclair	971		
Pearce Wetlands	3,329		
Sinclair Wetlands	11,642		
Stairy Grants	17,748		
		482	
			146,809
			146,809
DEFICIT FOR YEAR			
			26,397

DUCKS UNLIMITED NEW ZEALAND INC.
For Wetlands and Waterfowl.

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

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Membership is available in seven categories:
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A5, wire spiral bound and plastic laminated cover for easy use in the field, the handbook contains over 200 pages of technical information and advice. It includes 86 black and white and 46 colour photos and 11 line drawings. Price \$29.95.

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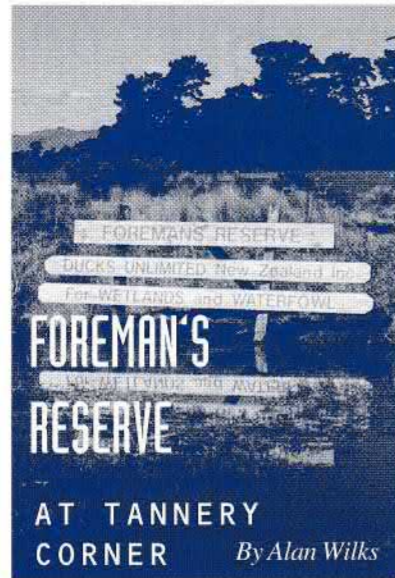
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Tannery Corner, named for the tannery which once stood there, is just north of Carterton, and has an interesting history. In 1978, Melvin Pike, a Carterton DU member, was engaged to drain what was then a swamp. Since then, Melvin has realised the value of wetlands and four years ago he asked the owner if he could restore the wetland, known as Foreman's Reserve, by building two dams.

Mr Foreman agreed, and paid for the bulk of the earthworks, with added input from Melvin and DU. Melvin also gained support from local businesses who donated fuel and digger time. The Carterton District Council donated 200 trees and these were planted two years ago by the Eketahuna Chapter. Since then the Masterton YMCA Wetland Conservation Corps have also planted locally propagated kahikatea.

With donated posts, 22 grey teal nest boxes have been erected and last year every one was used. Twelve clutches of Shoveler were raised on the wetland and this August, Black Swan had young cygnets. The nest boxes were used again.

The District Council recently nominated the wetland for the Wellington Region Environmental Award and it was selected as a finalist. DU was invited to the Beehive for the award ceremony, and



although we didn't win, Eketahuna Chapter Chairman Ross Cottle was presented with a certificate of recognition by Simon Upton, the Minister of Conservation.

Other finalists were a Girl Guide group, with a recycling programme, the Karori Reservoir Trust, a couple who have cleared their bush block of possums and are now regenerating native trees, two Forest and Bird members who are growing native trees for conservation, and the winner, Brandon Intermediate School, for their wetland restoration programme. DU has recently recognised Brandon Intermediate with the Andrew Dixon MacMaster Trophy as reported on page 7 of this issue of "Flight".

Melvin Pike and Ross Cottle at the Beehive after receiving a certificate of recognition from the Minister of Conservation. Photo: Alan Wilks.



The wetland from the rest area across the road. Photo: Peter Vere-Jones

The Foreman family have recently put a QEII National Trust Open Space covenant on their wetland and this will protect it for all time. This project has been a very productive partnership between the landowner, DU, and, above all, Melvin Pike who has been the driving force behind the project with his considerable contacts and keen interest in wetland conservation. We are indebted to the Foreman family, and to Melvin who was also responsible for the magnificent sign which proclaims to travellers on SH2 that this is a DU project.



1996 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Thanks to a hardworking band of members and Conference Convener Ross Cottle, the Annual Conference, held in July at the Solway Park Travelodge in Masterton, was enjoyed by everyone attending. The social gathering on Friday evening was a great success giving members the opportunity to get together and to meet with friends.

On Saturday morning about 15 people visited the National Wildlife Centre to see the rare flightless Campbell Island Teal while 30 people visited Jan and Bill Clinton-Baker's garden and wetland for a delicious lunch. The afternoon AGM was well attended and included an address by Geoff Reid about the Resource Management Act. This was replied to by Ian Buchanan from Wellington Regional Council and David Bishop from DoC. These speakers created much interest and discussion could have gone on all night.

The dinner and auction were outstanding with 133 people present, plus excellent food and auction items. Auctioneer Paul Percy provided great entertainment and we are grateful to him, and to local member Alan Drury who canvassed local businesses and received donations of over 50 auction items. Overall the evening raised \$8,100, well above budget.

On Sunday we enjoyed a planting presentation from Bud Jones before the weekend's activities concluded around midday. DU thanks everybody who made the weekend such a success, including everyone who donated fundraising items, especially Canadian Airlines who safely delivered our DU Canada goods.

ABRIDGED MINUTES OF THE 22nd DUCKS UNLIMITED ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

Immediate Past President, David Smith, opened the 1996 AGM at 2pm, and welcomed everyone in attendance. Apologies were received and recorded from 12 members. David then drew attention to the minutes of the 1995 AGM as summarised in Issue 85 of "Flight". These were approved on the motion of Diane Pritt and Nancy Payne.

David Smith presented his 1995/96 President's Report as printed in Issue 88 of "Flight" and expanded on the background to the gifting of the Sinclair Wetlands to DU by Horrie Sinclair. David's report was accepted on the motion of Murray Tapp and Diane Pritt before David handed the chair to the incumbent President, Alan Wilks who thanked David for his substantial work and effort during his term as President.

The Treasurer, Glenys Hansen informed the meeting that due to deadline difficulties the annual accounts were not available as the audit was not complete. Abridged accounts will be included in



Geoff Reid speaking on the Resource Management Act.



Neil Candy from the Manawatu Chapter accepts the Chapter Challenge from the President, Alan Wilks.



Past President Ian Pirani presenting the Bill Barrett Trophy to Diane Pritt.

Issue 89 of "Flight", with full copies available on request. Glenys recommended Eastwood Bourke be reappointed as auditor. This was accepted on the motion of Ian Lyver and Ross Cottle.

Four directors were elected from the floor. David Johnston and Ken Cook were

reappointed on the motion of Nancy Payne and David Smith, while Dale Stevens and Craig Worth were elected on the motion of Ian Pirani and Diane Pritt.

The Executive Director summarised his report as printed in "Flight" Issue 88 and answered questions regarding the proposal to survey the Chatham Islands as a possible Brown Teal release site and DU's strategy to increase membership. The meeting vigorously discussed DU's role with captive management programmes and the relationship with DoC. The point was made that DU should concentrate on wetland habitat and should not curtail this in favour of endangered species programmes, especially when these were difficult to advance. The President pointed out that endangered waterfowl were part of the DU mission and reinforced the progress being made, despite frustrations.

Carolyn Hooson presented the Editor's Report, Project Supervisor's presented their reports (Ken Cook, "Operation Wetlands"; Alan Wilks, Pearce Wetlands and "Operation Pateke"; David Smith, "Operation Whio"; David Johnston, "Operation Royal Swan") and answered questions. The sale of the Pearce Wetlands was the subject of a number of positive comments.

Before the meeting took a break, a number of presentations were made. The President presented the NZ Fish and Game Council with \$36,000 being funds received from DU Inc for US sales of NZ Duck Stamps on behalf of the Gamebird Habitat Trust. Certificates of Appreciation were presented to David Smith as Immediate Past President, and Ian Lyver following his retirement from the board.

There being no General Business, the meeting heard three addresses regarding the Resource Management Act. Speakers were Geoff Reid, a local member, Ian Buchanan from Wellington Regional Council, and David Bishop from DoC, each with a different perspective. Discussion continued until the President closed the meeting at 5pm.

DowElanco *and* DUCKS UNLIMITED:

A Partnership For Blue Duck Conservation



By Dr Grant Dumbell
& David Smith

A breeding pair of Blue Duck at Melvin Pike's near Carterton

INTRODUCTION

In May 1995, John Bishop, the General Manager of DowElanco, announced to the Board of Ducks Unlimited that DowElanco would support DU's "Operation Whio" by making a \$20,000 contribution over two years to the Blue Duck capital account within The New Zealand Waterfowl And Wetlands Trust. This announcement signalled the establishment of the largest donation to Blue Duck conservation yet achieved in New Zealand.

DowElanco's donation to The New Zealand Waterfowl And Wetlands Trust ensures that "Operation Whio" now has a significantly enlarged, and dedicated, annual income which is secure in the very long term. This is achieved through the Trust's status as a charitable capital trust whose sole beneficiary is DU.

BLUE DUCK AS AN ENDANGERED SPECIES

The endemic Blue Duck is a most unusual member of the worldwide family of waterfowl. It has no obvious close

relatives and is one of only a handful of ducks to inhabit swift flowing rivers. The only others are the Torrent Duck of South America and the Harlequin Duck of North America and Eastern Asia.

During the past century, Blue Duck have faced a range of environmental pressures which have caused a severe contraction in both their range and numbers. The development of the lowlands has seen the destruction of forested riverbanks while the construction of large scale hydroelectric schemes has dammed many wild rivers and led to the diversion of water away from others. Flood protection measures, such as channelling and other river training works, have severely modified the character of many rivers while the introduction of trout has brought Blue Duck into direct contact with a potential food competitor. Siltation of rivers also impacts food availability while introduced mammalian predators have reduced numbers through direct predation of adults, and a reduction in nesting success.

The result is that Blue Duck numbers have probably been reduced below 4-5000 birds living in the wild. Of more concern is their range which has contracted into the head waters of many rivers, with the result it has become discontinuous. The average population size is now very low which increases the chances of extinction for any one population through the effects of one catastrophic event. This was accurately recorded on the Manganui-te-ao River during the early 1980's when a volcanic lahar decimated the resident population of birds which then took more than a decade to recover.

In spite of the difficulties of gaining an accurate picture of the distribution of Blue Duck, the evidence supports their categorisation as one of the world's endangered waterfowl. In the North Island, Blue Duck are now only found on the western side of the volcanic plateau and along the axial ranges from the Ruahines north to the East Cape region. In the South Island they are found on the western side of the Main Divide, in North West Nelson and Fiordland. There are only remnant populations still persisting in Canterbury and Otago, a situation which contrasts with an historic range which stretched into the lowlands, and in some cases, all the way to sea level.

BACKGROUND TO "OPERATION WHIO"

DU has been involved with the conservation of Blue Duck for much of its 22 year history. In the early years DU give support to several visiting researchers who studied the birds ecology and behaviour. DU also supported attempts by a Churchill Fellow from Britain's Wildfowl Trust to collect fertile eggs for export to Britain, while DU members undertook early attempts to understand the aviculture of Blue Duck, despite the very low number of birds available.

Prior to 1988, probably the most significant achievement for "Operation Whio" was gaining approval to export two breeding pairs of birds to Sir Peter Scott's Wildfowl Trust in Britain. This established Blue Duck in the largest collection of waterfowl in the world and led to the birds being successfully bred in captivity. Blue Duck were eventually transferred to at least three of the Trust's

centres for breeding and display to the visiting public.

"Operation Whio" took a great leap forward in 1988 when DoC held a comprehensive seminar to bring together everyone interested in Blue Duck conservation. From this came the first integrated strategy to coordinate Blue Duck conservation and as part of this DU was charged with captive management through the establishment and support of the Blue Duck Captive Breeding Group.

The Blue Duck Conservation Strategy was a forerunner to DoC's species recovery plans and had a four year life from 1988 to 1992. This was meant to be replaced with a formal Blue Duck Recovery Plan, however, this has not yet occurred. Accordingly, "Operation Whio" risks becoming dislocated from the field conservation activities the captive management programme was meant to supply birds to for release into the wild.

Over the past several years DU has not had the financial resources to develop "Operation Whio" to address this difficulty. DowElanco's support of "Operation Whio" represents a new dawn for the project and has allowed the planning and prioritisation of future activities to ensure that "Operation Whio" makes the largest possible contribution to Blue Duck conservation.

"OPERATION WHIO" ACHIEVEMENTS

Since DU's involvement with Blue Duck conservation was formalised with the 1988 strategy, the following highlights have been achieved:

- establishment and maintenance of the Blue Duck Captive Breeding Group with representation from DOC and Blue Duck breeders;
- placement of all captive birds within DU's network of breeders;
- expansion of the captive population from 11 pairs to 18 pairs;
- establishment of a stud book to guide the management of the captive population;
- up to seven ducklings bred in any one year;
- collation of data on the captive breeding performance of Blue Duck;

- financial and logistical support for Massey University research investigating feeding competition between Blue Duck and trout;
- publication and distribution of a Blue Duck information pamphlet;

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF "OPERATION WHIO"

"Operation Whio" has so far been developed through the goodwill of captive breeders, and others, who have provided aviary space and have met operating costs, such as feed and transport, at no cost to DU. DowElanco's support of Blue Duck will allow this to change as it provides "Operation Whio" with an annual income from The New Zealand Waterfowl And Wetlands Trust.

In its current form, "Operation Whio" is solely an ex-situ captive management programme which lacks an in-situ recovery programme. Moving beyond this limitation must be a priority as without recovery initiatives in the field, further expansion of the captive management programme will lead to an annual production of juvenile birds whose benefits to Blue Duck conservation will not be maximised. Any field based programme must contain habitat and research elements as it is only by integrating these that new Blue Duck populations can be established.

Advocacy and education is the third area of potential development for "Operation Whio". Blue Duck are seen by many users of the back country, however, many of these people do not realise the birds are endangered. On the other hand there are many other New Zealanders who are simply not aware of Blue Duck. Ensuring that advocacy and education has a role in "Operation Whio" will lead to a wider base of support for the programme, and ultimately to an even greater resource base. In turn, this will allow further expansion of the programme to undertake tasks which cannot yet be contemplated.

KEY CAPTIVE MANAGEMENT TASKS

- Coordinate a captive management seminar to bring together the collective experience of breeders, including representation from the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust in Britain;

- Ensure the genetic viability of the British captive population through the export of additional unrelated male birds;
- Complete individual bird lifetime breeding histories from existing archive information and add this to the stud book record;
- Transfer the current manual stud book into a computerised format, such as the SPARKS (Small Population Animal Record Keeping System) programme;
- Develop and implement a captive management research programme to develop a successful dietary regime and seek answers to the low level of productivity from the captive management programme;
- Review the changing demographics of the captive population;
- Develop, write, and seek approval for a Blue Duck captive management plan, and a husbandry manual, according to approved DoC guidelines.

KEY RECOVERY AND RESEARCH TASKS

- Develop a release strategy;
- Liaise with DoC to identify potential release sites for captive bred birds, including an assessment of opportunities for further releases onto Mt Taranaki;
- Consider habitat enhancement



The Manganui-a-te-ao River flowing off the western side of Mt Ruapehu, the site of Kerry Oates Blue Duck predator control project. Photo: Grant Dumbell

and protection needs on private land at sites both adjacent to and remote from existing Blue Duck populations and link with the release strategy;

Compile a Blue Duck habitat strategy, to compliment actions proposed in the Blue Duck Recovery Plan, for implementation when resources allow.

KEY ADVOCACY AND EDUCATION TASKS

Seek the completion and approval of a redrafted Blue Duck Recovery Plan;

Develop a clear identity for "Operation Whio" as a single focus, proactive, conservation programme coordinated by DU and supported by DowElanco;

Develop Blue Duck resource material for schools;

Develop and produce a Blue Duck general information pamphlet for distribution through public information centres in Blue Duck areas;

Undertake periodic media releases to publicise the achievements of "Operation Whio".

RECENT PROGRESS

The current financial year is the first year in which the full benefits of DowElanco's donation will be received by DU, and already a number of progressive developments have begun. The first of these is DU support for a major predator control programme being undertaken by DU member Kerry Oates on the Manganui-a-te-ao River near Ohakune. This is budgeted to cost about \$20,000 and DU has been able to provide \$1,000 assistance towards this innovative eight and a half month project, the results of which will be particularly relevant to the development of a release strategy.

Kerry began studying Blue Duck in 1986 and since 1991 has recorded a rapid decline in both adult survival and



A Fenn Trap station baited with a fresh egg. Photo: Grant Dumbell

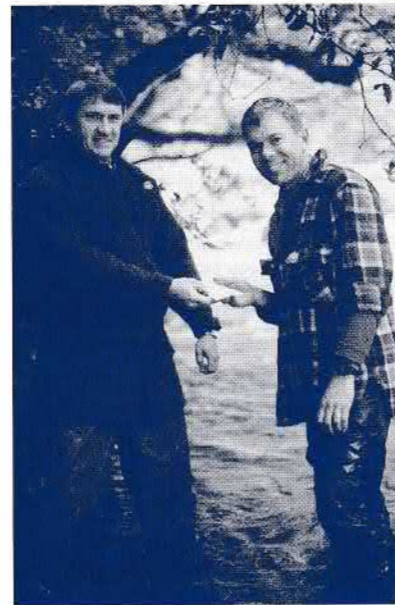
productivity per pair. Kerry has put this down to a combination of three factors including the age of the adults attempting to breed, spring floods destroying nests, and predation. He is now undertaking a large predator control programme to gauge the effects of predators.

This involves Kerry setting 200 Fenn Traps every night at 150 trap sites along about 18 km of river bank on both the Manganui-a-te-ao and the Makatote Rivers near State Highway 4. Each is baited with an egg and between February and June, Kerry caught 56 stoats, 121 rats, 20 possums and 9 other animals. However, there were no ferrets or weasels caught, which, along with last summer being a year in which the beech forest seeded heavily, suggests that predator populations are higher this year than others.

By trapping for such a long period before the Blue Duck breeding season Kerry will not only identify which predators are present, he will get an indication of their population sizes as they go through the winter, and will be able to judge the impact their removal has on breeding success.

DU has also recently received permission from DoC to export three additional male birds to the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust in Britain. This has become necessary because it is now known that when the original birds were sent to Britain in 1986, the two males that went were brothers. As a result, the international breeding programme was always going to be limited and would eventually suffer inbreeding depression.

This export will have virtually no impact on the New Zealand captive management programme as there are surplus male birds in New Zealand, including very close relatives of the males which will travel to the UK. It is planned to complete this important transfer before the end of the year so the males can be paired in Britain in time for the northern hemisphere breeding season which begins sometime around March. DU is also looking forward to having input from the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust as part of the planned Blue Duck captive



David Smith presenting Kerry Oates with a DU cheque for \$1000 as our contribution to his project. Photo: Grant Dumbell

management seminar as this will reinforce the truly international face of "Operation Whio".

SUMMARY

DowElanco's support for "Operation Whio", through a \$20,000 contribution to The New Zealand Waterfowl And Wetlands Trust, is the largest single contribution to Blue Duck conservation and is delivering immediate benefits to the programme. The Board of Ducks Unlimited and the Trustees of The New Zealand Waterfowl And Wetlands Trust are extremely grateful for the support which the company has provided.

In the short term, DU will focus on the captive management tasks, especially the captive management seminar. In the longer term this focus will widen to ensure that the recovery and research tasks, and the advocacy and education tasks, are undertaken as and when needed to transform "Operation Whio" from a narrowly focussed ex-situ programme to an integrated conservation programme able to lie alongside and complement DoC's own Blue Duck recovery programme. Then "Operation Whio" will be a meaningful partnership for Blue Duck conservation in every sense.

The Simplicity WATERFOWL FEEDER

By Roger Brooks

Some time ago I was given a homemade grain dispenser which is so simple I've called it the Simplicity feeder. It really works and I thought members would be interested in its design.

All that is needed is a 10 litre plastic paint bucket with lid, an empty plastic lemonade bottle or something similar, four pop rivets or screws and a bit of wire. A couple of stakes and a short piece of rod to hang the feeder on will complete your Simplicity feeder.

To assemble the Simplicity feeder simply follow these steps:

- 1 Cut an 80mm square hole in the centre of the bottom of the bucket.
- 2 Cut the threaded piece off the top of the plastic bottle.
- 3 Cut four small triangles out of the sidewall of the plastic bottle right at the bottom of the bottle then cut the bottom off the bottle by cutting around the sidewall 45mm up from the bottom. Drill
- 4 Make four 50mm vertical cuts equidistant around the wall of the bottle from where the bottom section was removed. Invert the bottle through the hole in the bucket. Bend the 50mm cut segments outward and rivet or screw them to the bottom of the bucket.
- 5 Drill four holes in the shoulder of the bottle to match those in the cut-off bottom piece.



The completed Simplicity feeder ready for installation.

four small holes equidistant around the cut edge of this bottom piece.

6 You now have a paint bucket with the top of a plastic bottle sticking out the bottom. Hang the bucket from its handle so you can easily complete the next step.

7 Thread two parallel wires through the holes in the shoulder of the bottle and bend them downwards. Attach the cut-off bottom piece so it hangs underneath the neck of the bottle ensuring there is sufficient gap to allow feed to flow through the neck of the bottle and into the suspended feeding tray.

After a camouflaging coat of paint on the bucket your Simplicity feeder is now ready for installation in the field. Mount it so the feeding tray is about 20cm above the water. It can be mounted higher for geese and swan.

When it's filled with grain the birds peck at the clear bottom container and the feed trickles out. But beware - if left empty they will rip it to pieces. Take my word for it, this feeder works.

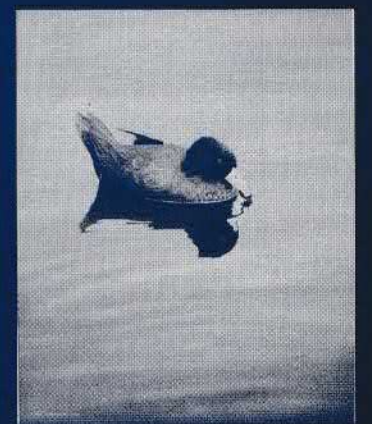


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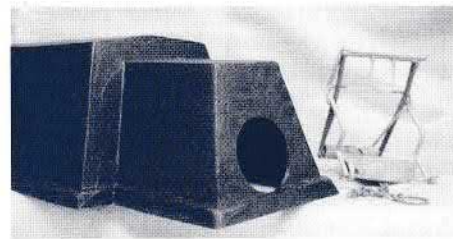
SUPPORT "OPERATION WHIO"



Purchase a unique limited edition Paul Martinson art print. These unframed prints are numbered and signed by the artist. \$45 each incl post and pack Ideal Christmas gift

Shopping

FOR AROUND THE POND



FENN TRAP MK 6

Deadly on ferrets, stoats, weasels and rats, these all metal traps are easy to set and are the ultimate quick kill tunnel trap. **\$30.00 each or \$50.00 pair**

FENN TRAP TUNNEL

These heavy duty moulded fenn trap tunnels are perfect for safely setting your Fenn Traps. Each tunnel can be used to house either one or two traps, depending on your set. As used by the Department of Conservation, they actually increase your catch rate. **\$35.00**



TIMMS TRAP

We now stock the well known and effective Timms Trap to complement the Fenn Trap. The Timms Trap is perfect for larger animals, such as possums and cats. Bait with either fruit or meat depending on your trapping target. **\$40.00**

BAIT STATION

This waterproof heavy duty plastic bait station is ideal for around your captive pond or aviary. It has a huge bait reservoir and can be used against possums, rabbits and rats. It really is a "set and forget"

predator control weapon to add to your trapping programme. **\$25.00**



GREY TEAL NEST BOX

As featured in "Flight" magazine, these Grey Teal nest boxes come in a prefabricated form ready to assemble and erect on your pond. They come complete with mounts ready to fit to your own post. **\$25.00**

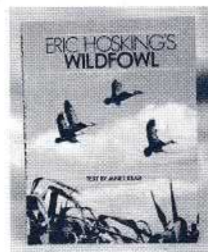
ESSENTIAL READING

NEW ZEALAND WETLANDS: A MANAGEMENT GUIDE

Far and away the most comprehensive New Zealand guide to managing wetlands. This has a load of answers to your questions about how to build a wetland, what to plant, what lives in a wetland, what legal controls apply and where to go for further information. This book is required reading for anybody who is serious about looking after wetlands. **\$25.00**

ERIC HOSKING'S WILDFOWL

A must for anybody interested in wildfowl this book is full of magnificent photographs by one of the world's foremost wildlife photographers. **\$20.00**



PONDS AND LAKES FOR WATERFOWL
Published in Britain by the Game Conservancy, this book covers the



development and improvement of waterfowl habitat with many interesting ideas. **\$54.00**

WETLANDS - DISCOVERING N.Z.'S SHY PLACES

An excellent book in which the author, a former QEII National Trust Regional Representative, visits wetlands of varying types throughout New Zealand. **\$15.00**

THE DU ART GALLERY

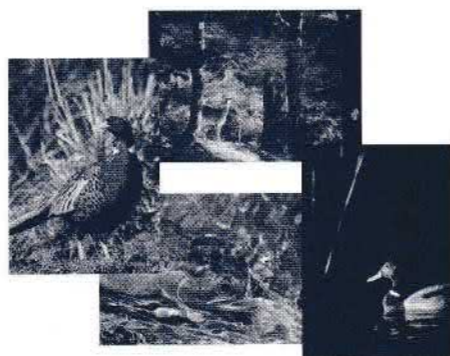
LIMITED EDITION ART PRINTS

There are five fine art prints by five New Zealand artists in this exclusive DU art series. All prints are signed and numbered limited editions. They come to you unmounted so you can match your choice of frame to your decor. The prints are:

- Brown Teal Pauline Morse
 - Grey Teal Lex Hedley
 - Blue Duck Paul Martinson
 - Shoveler Russell Jackson
 - Mallards Janet Marshall
- \$45.00 each**

NEW ZEALAND WILDLIFE CARDS

These beautiful greeting cards feature stunning photo's of our best known sporting wildlife. They are blank inside for you to personalise with your own message, and come with their own envelope. There are four cards in the series including Mallard, Pheasant, Sika Deer, and Rainbow Trout. **\$3.00 each**



WEAR YOUR SUPPORT FOR WETLANDS



DU SILK TIES

Our very attractive imported 100% silk ties all feature the DU duck head in gold. **\$40.00**

DU MONOGRAMMED POLO SHIRT

Our hard wearing white polo shirts are great casual wear. They feature an embroidered DU logo and come in sizes of small, medium, large and extra large. **\$30.00**

DU CAPS

These baseball style hats are one size fits all and are in a range of colours including black, red and blue. Keep the weather out of your eyes, whatever the weather. **\$15.00**

DU MONOGRAMMED CLOTH PATCH

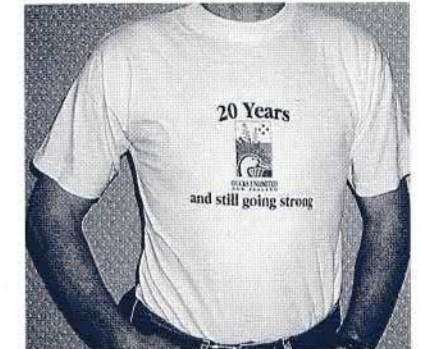
Our monogrammed cloth jacket patches

are available in navy and white. They have overlapped edges and can easily be sewn onto your jacket. **\$10.00**



lapel pin, and the large duck head lapel pin. Specify your choice. **\$4.00**

DU 20TH ANNIVERSARY T-SHIRT
These cotton, unbleached T-shirts proudly display a silkscreened DU logo and come in sizes of medium, large and extra large. Great summer T-shirt, or wear it under your winter shirts for extra warmth. **Reduced to clear \$15.00**



DU LAPEL PINS

These look great on your jacket lapel. Styles include the DUNZ logo lapel pin, a duck head stick pin, a small duck head



DU DECAL

Show your membership with pride with our colourful logo in permanent vinyl suitable for cars, boats, bags, anywhere. **\$1.00**

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Please charge my credit card VISA/MASTERCARD		_____	_____	_____
Card No. _____		_____	_____	_____
Expires: _____		_____	_____	_____
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