

# Flight

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2002

ISSUE 110



**DUCKS UNLIMITED NEW ZEALAND INC.**

[www.ducks.org.nz](http://www.ducks.org.nz)

For Wetlands and Waterfowl.





## wetland care NEW ZEALAND

**Wetland Care New Zealand's mission is to: 'Harness community, business and government resources to restore and develop lost wetland areas within New Zealand.'**

### Funding

Funding for projects comes mainly from the Waterfowl and Wetlands Trust, which was established 12 years ago and has underwritten wetland development projects to a significant

level. Extra resources have come through fundraising and corporate sponsorships like that from Banrock Station Wines. Wetland Care New Zealand actively seeks funding from private and public sources for its work.

### Partnerships

Central to Wetland Care New Zealand's mission is forming partnerships with people and organisations with similar aims. Alliances are being established with conservation groups like DOC, NZ Fish and Game, Forest & Bird and regional councils.

### Taking Care of Wetlands

Wetland Care New Zealand's current and completed projects and partnerships include:

Ashhurst Domain Project - Manawatu

Camm Brown Teal Wetland project - Northland

Home Lagoon Project - Wairarapa

Karori Sanctuary Wetland Development - Wellington

Magill Wetland - SH1 Reporoa

Mana Island Brown Teal Wetland

Pearce Wetlands - Wairarapa

Sinclair Wetlands - Otago

For further information, please contact:

William Abel - Director,  
Wetland Care New Zealand  
(04) 478 4335

## QUEEN ELIZABETH II NATIONAL TRUST

### The QE II National Trust:

Protects natural areas of New Zealand in partnership with private landowners.

Places open space covenants over private land to provide legal protection in perpetuity.

Supports Covenanteers by regularly inspecting the protected land and offering management advice and assistance.

Owms Tugare and Holland Gardens in Taranaki, which are open to the public.

Owms a number of properties with natural values, including Taupo Swamp just north of Wellington on SH1.

Accepts gifts and bequests to help with its work.

Has a membership exceeding 2500 New Zealanders who care about protecting our country for the future.

*As at June  
2001, there  
were 1476  
registered  
Open Space  
Covenants  
totalling  
54,536  
hectares.*



Queen Elizabeth II

## National Trust

Nga Kairauhi Papa

Want to give permanent protection to a natural feature on your land, but want to retain ownership, manage it yourself, and have control over public access? An open space covenant might be the answer. Call freephone 0508 732 878

## GOOD EARTH, FINE WINE - BANROCK STATION

In the heart of South Australia's Riverland region Banrock Station is a 1700 hectare property encompassing a floodplain, wetland lagoon, a protected native eco system, 250 hectares of vineyard and the Banrock Station Wine & Wetland Centre.

In addition to restoring the magnificent Banrock Station Wetland we are working to ensure environmental havens are preserved for future generations by donating part proceeds of sales of Banrock Station wines to wetland care New Zealand.

### 2000 Cabernet Merlot

This Cabernet Merlot has lovely rich flavours of plum and cherry with hints of cinnamon, subtle vanilla oak and soft fine tannins. Enjoy now or over the next 2-3 years.



DU members will know of Banrock Station's generous donation last year of \$10,000 to Wetland Care, for the Karori Wildlife Sanctuary in Wellington. Banrock Station donates part proceeds of wine sales to wetland restoration projects around the world.

The label illustrated is for Banrock's 2000 Cabernet Merlot, featuring the Wetland Care New Zealand logo along with information on the company's support for Wetland Care. The company is a great example of intelligent sponsorship in action. Thus, when you buy their good and affordable wine, you are also furthering wetland preservation internationally.



# INSIGHT

*Craig Worth*  
*President*

*I would like to begin by wishing everyone a happy and prosperous New Year and trust you all had an enjoyable Christmas and a relaxing holiday. This is my last Insight as your President because the April issue will be up to new president Neil Candy.*

*I find it hard to believe that nearly two years have passed since I took over from Graham Gurr and I have thoroughly enjoyed my time at the helm; although there have been some frustrations there have also been many highlights.*

*My greatest frustration and disappointment has been our failure to achieve the Chatham Islands brown teal release which would have been a milestone in DU's history, but DOC holds all the aces and try as we might we couldn't win that one. Eventually we became tired of arguing and with the support of our members we had to walk away.*

*I am also disappointed that our membership hasn't grown in the last two years, but at least it hasn't declined. We are attracting new members which is encouraging, but it only keeps pace with those who don't renew.*

*There have been a number of positives. I was pleased to be able to host Canadian hydrologist Ron Coley early last year. Ron has recently retired from DU Canada after more than 30 years, the last 27 as Chief Engineer; and is now an international consultant in wetland habitat creation, preservation and management. His time here was invaluable and well worth the expense of bringing him to NZ. The report he did on Lake Waikare and the Whangamarino is vital to our opposition to the application by Environment Waikato for a resource consent renewal in its present form. I am confident that this matter will have a successful outcome.*

*The last two conference weekends have been very successful and I am heartened by the revival of the Waikato Chapter and the increasing numbers of grey teal in the area. The members working on the nest box programme are to be congratulated; we need more in other areas.*

*Finally, my thanks for the support I've had from the Board and I must acknowledge our captive-breeding co-ordinators, but above all, our members, without whom DU would not exist.*

**We pay tribute** to Sir Peter Blake, shining New Zealander - an inspiring leader who never gave up his passion for the world's waterways. He lived his dream, and Blake Expeditions will live on for him.

'We cannot discover new oceans unless we have the courage to lose sight of the shore.' (André Gide)



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### 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: Michael and Margaret Beddek's pond, Tuakau.  
Photo: Graham Gurr.

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### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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# OUR *People*



## **Michael and Margaret Beddek**

A member for 10 years, Michael lives at Tuakau south of Pukekohe and is married to Margaret.

They have twin sons. Born in Birkenhead he was educated at Auckland Grammar School and started his working life as office boy in a large private company - of which he later became Chief Executive. His interests are fishing, clay target shooting and shooting. A member of local Fish and Game clubs, Michael is involved in conservation of the Dean Block wetland at Pokeno.



## **Roy Dench**

Born in Hamilton, Roy attended Paterangi Primary School and Te Awamutu College. An inaugural member of DU, he has two daughters and four grandchildren. He spent 15 years as a motor mechanic and 35 years as a dairy farmer. Roy is a trustee of the NZ Native Forest Restoration Trust and a member of ACRE, the Advisory Committee for the Regional Environment. He is a Past President of the Otorohanga Kiwi House and has been a committee member for 26 years. A firearms instructor with the NZ Mountain Safety Council, Roy has worked for them as a bushcraft instructor, and is President of the Tongariro Natural History Society.

Roy encourages waterfowl through building ponds on his property and advises other farmers on building and enhancing their wetland areas. We admire his enthusiasm for conservation. It was Roy who so ably drove the bus for the last AGM field trip.

## **Sir Peter Blake**

**1948-2001**

'He had left behind his many major achievements in sport to dedicate himself to creating greater awareness of the need to take better care of the world on which we live. And, typical of the man, he was giving his heart and soul along with all those other virtues with which he had become synonymous - total passion, charisma, commitment, leadership and integrity.'

- Alan Sefton's statement, posted on the website of Blakexpeditions at:  
[www.blakexpeditions.com](http://www.blakexpeditions.com)





## Board Business

The 119th Board meeting was held on 22 September, but too late to include in the October issue.

There was one apology. The only issue arising from the previous minutes concerned overdue subscriptions. Alan Wilks advised the Board that Flight's October issue would include a letter to the members concerned, informing them that this would be the last issue they would receive until their subs were paid. Alan also suggested that we would save on mailout costs in future if we send such a letter with the July issue, so that those not intending to renew their membership would only get two more free issues.

The President's report was accepted and a couple of items of correspondence were tabled. The Treasurer's report prompted considerable discussion about DU's financial position. We are very close to budget but there's no room for complacency. Graham also informed the meeting that the auditors had picked up a GST error from two years ago, and we owe \$1700 to IRD. This will be paid with the next return. Graham commented that our membership position remains reasonably steady, and endorsed the excellent job Sandra Pipes is doing as Membership Secretary.

## NZ Waterfowl and Wetlands Trust

David Smith presented a report and said he had received advice from Spicers regarding the investment, it would be unwise to consider any changes to the portfolio, which had initially dropped in value after the recent events in America. Fortunately it had recovered considerably by mid-November.

## AGM 2001

Ross Cottle advised that AGM Secretary Michelle McKay needs assistance at the end of the evening to receive payments for auction items. The Waikato Chapter, who will be running the next one, should make allowances for this.

A vote of appreciation and thanks were extended to Ross and his team for running the event so successfully, and to Jim and Marilyn Law for their personal contribution.

## DU Name Change

Some discussion took place regarding the notice of motion put at the AGM, that the name should be changed to Ducks Unlimited & Wetland Care NZ. William Abel in his report stated that such a change would negate our contract with Banrock Station and David Wilks explained that Wetland Care NZ is only a renaming of Operation Wetlands and will just work alongside DU but not take it over.

## Manawatu Chapter

The Dinner and Auction were held at the Coachman Hotel, Palmerston North, on 13 October. One hundred and five people attended to a superb menu, which was supplemented by various game dishes. A great selection of auction items was available, a highlight being the sale of a live emu. We made a profit of \$6800, a great result all round. A big thank-you to everyone who donated auction items ranging from knitted wool hats to a tent and a kayak. We also showed the Banrock Station video to give everyone a quick look at what they are doing, not only in Australia but worldwide.

All in all a very successful evening and a big thank you to auctioneer Mr Bob Wood, who once again was at his very best.

- Neil Candy

## Waikato Chapter

A very successful evening was held at the Glenvue Gun Club on 29 September attended by 34 members and 12 guests who we hope will join. The net profit for the event was over \$3,000 which will be well received by the Lake Waikare fighting fund. A sterling effort.

On 4 November the chapter organised a visit to Hamilton Zoo and after viewing the animals a BYO BBQ was held. The weather was atrocious but for the 15 who braved the elements it was an enjoyable outing. A Lake Party is planned for this coming March which should be a lot of fun. Dinghy, sack and egg-and-spoon races are planned with gumbboot and horseshoe throwing and tyre rolling skittles and lots more. The day will conclude with drinks and a BBQ meal in the evening.

The date has yet to be finalised but chapter members will be notified.

For further information contact Jack Worth on 07 846 3808.

## Wairarapa Chapter

A very successful sporting clay shoot was held at the Eketahuna Gun Club on 28 October with 56 shooters attending, which was very pleasing considering it clashed with another shoot being held in Martinborough. Andrew Mitchell won the Francis Murray-Ansley cup with an excellent score of 96 out of 100 and went on in the second round to score 50 out of 50. Well done Andrew.

Special thanks to the Eketahuna Gun Club for the use of the grounds, Wairarapa Hunting and Fishing for sponsoring prizes, Alex Gillett who donated copies of his trout fishing books and Simon O'Connor, Kilwell Sports Palmerston North, for the loan of some traps. Also Neil Candy for his time in setting up the traps on Saturday as well as all the other helpers. It was a great fun day, thoroughly enjoyed by all and raised \$900 for DU. A splendid effort.

## An apology and two announcements...

Observant readers will have seen the incorrect front cover photo caption on page three of the last issue. It should of course have been 'Grey Teal', photo by Gail Simons.

We regret to announce that Steve Oxenham of Gallery Books & Crafts has resigned as editor of Flight, for personal reasons. Steve has edited the last 19 issues and members will agree he has done an outstanding job. We are grateful, Steve, for your dedication and professionalism over the last five years and wish you well for the future.

The good news is that Juliet Oliver of Greytown has taken over and we look forward to working with her. Again, we are grateful to Steve for assisting Juliet with this issue.

## Greetings from a new editor.

Over the last few years I have often met Steve at Lamb Peters Print, dealing with another issue of Flight. Innocent days - since the middle of November when this job skidded into my life like a duck landing at speed. I have felt slightly as if I've hit the air running, to stretch the metaphor somewhat. Steve has been very helpful with the handover, but time has not been long to prepare this issue. If you find a lot of large illustrations, it's not panic at all - it's looking at the big picture.

I met the Wilks and Ducks Unlimited in the 1980s. After 17 years of farming life on the Wairarapa coast. I have a few memories of that first weekend in May - such as arguing to spare pukekos and inventing new mallard casseroles.

I come from Nelson, and have lived in the Wairarapa since 1970 (in my maternal grandfather's Shetland I'd still be called an incomer). Since my three young left college I have been an editorial researcher for Reader's Digest and an adult education co-ordinator, run a public art gallery, taught writing skills in a prison and had a first taste of OE. In May my first book was launched: a history of Transit Group Ltd, NZ's second-largest private bus company. I especially enjoyed the oral history aspect of this project; the real voices of (extra) ordinary people tell our stories with more truth and directness than any official record.

A new section in Flight will be for you to tell your stories - funny moments, small and large dramas... 'it happened like this' tales. Can I look forward to a torrent of material for the next issue? And when I heard about the job, I thought 'long live the weeds and the wilderness' - so you'll find a poem here too...

I look forward very much to working on Flight, and to learning more about your work and wetland conservation in general.

- Juliet



## National Raffle Results

First Prize - Shaun Morgan, Ngongataha.  
 Second Prize - Dave Sim, Greytown.  
 Third Prize - Neil Walsh, Gisborne.  
 Fourth Prize - Paul Martinson, Masterton.  
 Congratulations to the winners, who are all DU members, and our thanks to all who supported the raffle. This is a major

fundraiser for wetlands. We are grateful to Joyce Brooks who again sold 200 tickets, a wonderful effort, and we acknowledge the hard work of organiser Glenys Hansen. It's not an easy job but Glenys did it in her inimitable style.  
 Thankyou.



Glenys Hansen's wetland at Tidsfordriv, Matahiwi

## Reports

David Smith updated the Lake Waikare situation and reported on the Chatham Island Brown Teal release proposal, and the Board accepted the AGM motion that we apply to use the Millennium funding elsewhere. Letters will be sent to Wrightson, Farmlands and Gallagher, explaining the situation and thanking them for their support and offers to assist with materials for the project.

(See page 7)

William Abel gave a positive royal swan report, and Neil Candy tabled a proposal from who captive-breeding co-ordinator Peter Russell to seek funding to establish a 'Half Way House' in which to hold birds to toughen them up prior to release. It was agreed David Smith would write to the Millennium Office requesting that the balance of the Chatham Islands funding be put towards this Blue Duck project. Neil also commented on our involvement at the National Field Days. He suggested that if we are involved again we should increase our presence with far more publicity material and photographs to make it worthwhile. He undertook to write to Taupo Plant Nursery thanking them for letting us use part of their site.

Members David Johnston and Dr. Mike Hucks attended the meeting just before lunch and Mike, representing the Wildfowlers Association, later spoke on their negotiations with Mighty River Power which generates electricity on the Waikato River. He explained that MRP only generates at peak periods to get the best financial return; because they have little storage capacity the river flow varies by as much as 2.8 metres, with a disastrous effect on adjacent wetlands. The power company has offered \$200,000 a year for 35 years by way of compensation. Interested parties are investigating the best options for using the funding. He was asking nothing of DU, just keeping us informed.

Graham Gurr demonstrated the two new grain dispensers that now appear on the Flight sales page.

The board accepted Alan's proposal to give the MacMaster Grant to Tararua College before presenting the trophy, so that they could get on with their work. He also reminded all members to send interesting information and illustrations for Flight.

(See MacMaster Trophy report page 10)

The meeting scheduled for 17 November was cancelled as some directors were unavailable. Two urgent items were dealt with in a teleconference held on 26 November, with seven directors on line.

David Smith updated the Lake Waikare situation (page 7).

We also discussed the establishment of The Brown Teal Conservation Trust by DU members Neil Hayes and Kevin Evans. This trust has no direct connection with DU and we had no association with its establishment. The Board whole-heartedly supports the aims and objectives of the trust in the conservation of brown teal, but felt that it would not be possible for Kevin to wear two hats and continue as co-ordinator of the DU captive-breeding programme. We have appointed director Ossie Latham to replace him. The work Kevin has done for DU and brown teal was gratefully acknowledged.

The Brown Teal Conservation Trust was formed with the goal of working towards saving the endangered brown teal from extinction. The Trust aims to do this by: helping preserve and enhance brown teal habitat; educating people towards a greater appreciation of the plight of the brown teal; liaising with all interested individuals and groups, especially DOC and Ducks Unlimited NZ; and playing a major advocacy role. The Trust also aims to play a major role in the captive propagation of brown teal, and has received a generous grant from the Pacific Development Trust for the establishment of

a captive-breeding centre designed to suit the unique habits of brown teal.

The Trust plans to work closely with the UK Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, which holds the only brown teal outside New Zealand, with a view to expanding the UK's captive brown teal population as a safety measure.

Membership of the Trust is open to everyone wishing to save our unique brown teal from extinction.

Further information is available from PO Box 188, Carterton.

(From The Brown Teal Conservation Trust press release, 3 October 2001)

## DU Conference 2002

Based at: Alcamo Hotel,  
 Te Rapa Rd, Hamilton  
 When is it: 19 - 21 July 2002

### What's on:

#### Friday 19 July Midday

Sporting clay bird shoot  
 50-target DU Championship shoot hosted by the Waikato Gun Club

#### Evening

'Happy Hour' and dinner at the Alcamo Hotel house bar.  
 Relax and socialise with old friends.

#### Saturday 20 July Field Trip Morning

Hopu Hopu Grey Teal project observation  
 A rare opportunity to tour the Genesis Power Station, Huntly, Lake Whangape, Waahi and Rotongaro observation  
 Lunch at Cooks Winery, Te Kauwhata

#### Afternoon

Whangamarino wetland and weir tour  
 Lake Waikare observation and professional commentary on the history behind this project and its associated problems. See at first hand why DUNZ is spending a lot of money fighting for this precious wetland area.

You will see six lakes, the Whangamarino Wetland and the Waikato River during this field trip.

#### Evening

Shooting prizegiving  
 Dinner, the main Auction, silent auction.

#### Sunday 21 July Morning

#### AGM

A Hamilton Zoo visit or river cruise for those who don't wish to rush home

Please note: this is a draft programme and may be updated in the April issue, which will also contain booking details. Polish up those gumboots, there's heaps planned.

## LAKE WAIKARE

Since the AGM we have met with Environment Waikato to see if there was any way forward, other than to have the appeal heard by the Court. It became apparent early on that the engineering department, which brought the application in the first place, had not kept the rest of the Council informed. While no resolutions were made at the meeting, it resulted in agreement as to further information which was necessary for all concerned. NIWA have been commissioned to complete a report and we were able to have some input into the terms of reference.

The legal boundaries of landowners are to be established as we have pointed out that it is most unlikely that any private landowner's property would be flooded if the lake level was raised. The natural lake level establishes their boundaries and it will be Crown land that would be re-flooded by any rise in the lake.

An analysis of the material obtained by way of formal discovery shows that the need for the lower lake level has only occurred for approximately five days since the scheme was installed in the late 1960s and failed to stop the main road from flooding in any event.

Fish and Game have also been proactive. They have hosted a visit by nine MPs from all parties and we understand they left concerned as to what is occurring. Unfortunately as it was during the working week there was no local DU representation during their tour.

The Ministry for the Environment has approved funding for our legal costs for the appeal up to \$20,000, subject to DUNZ entering

into a deed setting out the terms and conditions. That is not yet to hand.

## CHATHAM ISLANDS BROWN TEAL

David Smith met with Dr Colin Miskelly and Christine Reed from DOC to discuss what could be done about our Millennium project. DOC has decided that a suite of four birds - brown teal, paradise duck, scaup and blue duck - should be established on the islands. To do so a quarantine aviary needs to be built at a cost in the order of \$100,000. They believed the funds we had received should be put towards that.

This proposal is so far from our initial project that the board has decided to return the balance of the funds held. A reconciliation is being completed and will be with the funding agency by the time this goes to print. We can then attempt to obtain a new grant for a project that can be in our total control. Whether we are able to obtain a second grant remains very much up in the air. The Board's preferred option is to place the fund in a pre-release aviary for blue duck.

A lot of time and money has been completely wasted, an opportunity lost and brown teal continue to dwindle in number, all because DOC failed to have its act together.

- David Smith

## Operation Gretel

From the survey forms I have received it would appear to be a bumper season here in the Waikato.

Up to 12 October last year, seven different sites with over 200 boxes were inspected and 118 of these were either scratched out or contained eggs. 873 eggs were counted and 170 adult teal were tallied along with numerous ducklings at various stages, trailing behind mum and dad.

Our premier site (100 boxes) at Flexman's, Pokeno, is leading the charge and Chris Bindon reports that about 90 adults were present on inspection day (where can you go to see 90 greys or spoonies?), which reinforces my belief that Project Gretel is an outstanding success and should be used as an example to recruit more members, in particular the hunting fraternity.

- Jack Worth.

## Blue Duck

### 2001-2002 Breeding Season

We have at the present time 12 Ducklings: four at Peacock Springs, four Eggs from Orana Park hatched at Peacock Springs, four with Jim Campbell. There are Palmerston North and Broadlands pairs sitting.

The year is looking good for ducklings and we will again be doing a release on Egmont National Park.

The Recovery Group Meeting was held at the DOC office in Wellington, with all members present for the first day. Funding is still a big issue with the Recovery Group. For the next funding round we will strongly emphasise the point that isolating blue duck on an island is not the answer - it must be in its natural mainland environment of fast running rivers with plenty of vegetation to the water's edge. Fiordland National Park (Clinton and Arthur Valleys)

A four-year study on these two valleys started in the summer of 2000/01 revealed an alarming picture. A high sex imbalance was found with 18 males and five females in the Clinton and 11 males and six females in the

Arthur. Ten pairs were monitored through breeding with no young fledged. Three nests were monitored by video equipment and all nests were lost to stoat predation. Two females died during the season, with at least one of them killed by a stoat.

Stoat control was started on the Clinton during October 2000 and until the end of March this year 318 stoats were trapped. Up till this month they have caught over 400, with 180 stations spaced at 200m intervals. Traps were checked nine times over this period. One pair of Blue Duck has just hatched six ducklings on the Clinton.

No stoat control has been put into the Arthur Valley; all nests have been destroyed and one female was killed by a stoat.

Stoat control is definitely helping on the Clinton but it will still take many years for Blue Duck numbers to be viable.

- Peter Russell

## Letters to the Editor

15 October 2001

Dear Sir

I was disappointed to read the letter (Flight 109) from Graham Gurr to Sandra Lee, Minister of Conservation, recommending the lifting of the protection on grey teal. As an early member of DU, and one who has only belonged to the organisation to support the great work it has done for wetland preservation and for helping the increase in waterfowl numbers, such a recommendation gets no support from me.

Ducks Unlimited has always had a catch cry of 'waterfowl on every wetland' and it has set to work to encourage this both by creating wetlands and through breeding programmes. Now it appears it wants to set about and destroy that which it has so carefully created.

As one who has developed wetlands on two properties, I have not yet encouraged grey teal to any extent. Therefore I do not believe they are plentiful enough to be shot, although I do know as a birdwatcher, that their numbers have increased over the years, thanks mainly to DU work. But they certainly have not spread

everywhere or to any wetland I have helped to create.

Although a bird of the Manukau harbour, where I live, I have only ever recorded them twice on the bird roost near my house and once further east where a flock of 30 was once seen. Otherwise they have not been seen here whereas black swan, Canada geese, mallard and grey duck have, and even shoveler is regularly at these localities.

I therefore don't believe they are plentiful enough to shoot, and if they were plentiful enough I would still see no reason to shoot such a nice bird, as the photo on your cover of Flight emphasised.

If you must shoot birds, and such a philosophy is contrary to a world of ducks unlimited, why not then stick to mallards. That would let those of us who would give anything to have grey teal on their ponds, a chance of having them.

May I suggest, then, that you re-examine your thinking and tell the minister to let the shooting status of grey teal remain as is for the sake of those of us who would rather have "grey teals unlimited". For those who would rather eat them can I suggest muscovy instead.

- Stuart Chambers, Clarks Beach

## Graham Gurr replies:

For the past 20-plus years DUNZ has had a project by the name of Gretel, for the purpose of increasing the number of grey teal in New Zealand. One of the measures of success that was envisaged would be when the grey teal reach such numbers as to be placed on the gamebird list. A population of sufficient size to be self sustaining and harvestable. In several parts of the country, including the Waikato, that position was reached several years ago.

Fish and Game were in discussions with DOC regarding a change of status when the Minister of Conservation increased the fine for shooting a protected species from \$5000 to \$100,000. Grey teal are neither threatened nor endangered. DU through Operation Gretel has made sure of that.

(Continued on page 11)





# INTERACTIONS

## Sparks Park

### Another Wetland Care NZ Partnership

*In 1997 Miss Dulcie Routhan gave 2ha of land on the edge of town to the Carterton District Council, to be developed as a leisure area called Sparks Park.*

She had inherited 30 acres from her grandfather, Thomas Sparks, one of the earliest settlers in the district. He worked at the mill in town and in the evenings he and his wife cleared the land for farming. He was also the Carterton Bandmaster for many years.

Council engaged consultants to draw up plans, including a 2 acre wetland, and formed a trust under the chairmanship of Bill Knowles. Longtime DU supporter and council employee Melvin Pike was

appointed as a trustee for his experience with wetlands and waterfowl, and Council provided \$10,000.

Once plans were finalised the trust received \$25,000 from the Millennium Fund and \$3,000 from Wetland Care NZ, and tenders were called for the creation of the wetland.

Needless to say, that doyen of the diggers member Gary Thomson was way under any other tender and the work went ahead last winter. Of course, our Jim Campbell sniffed the creation of a wetland and was in boots and all. We understand that Melvin, Jim and Gary contributed \$6,000 worth of free labour to the project and this was acknowledged at the opening ceremony on Sunday 2 December. The area will be covenanted with the QEII National Trust. Community groups and schools will be involved with further planting, and Sparks Park will soon become a great asset to the district. DU can be proud of another practical partnership - this is the way communities flourish.



*Ross Cottle, Jim Campbell, Gary Thomson and Melvin Pike at the opening.*



*Sparks Park Opening Day, 2 December 2001.*

### Piloting Watercare

Wellington Regional Council's education co-ordinator Richard Morgan inspects the stream at Masterton's Hiona Intermediate while students look on. The inspection is part of a programme, piloted at the school this year, which saw all classes take part in field trips. On each trip they started at Mt Holdsworth and made water-tests in several places on the way back to school. The programme, Learnwell, is part of the Regional Council's environment and communication strategy, and will be officially launched in February. In the first year Learnwell will focus on water, teaching students (levels?) how to tell whether waterways are healthy or not.



### Hooked on their Wetland

Southeast of Okato, on Oxford Road, lies the dairy farm of Merv and Rae Hooker. Some years ago, a previous owner partially dammed a small stream in a gully that runs through the middle of the block. The result was, eventually, an attractive, long narrow lake with a margin of raupo and *carex* wetland and podocarp forest remnant. The lake and margins are a favourite with local birdlife, and regular visitors include kereru, bellbird, black swan, paradise shelduck, white-faced heron and pukeko.

In the five years that they've owned the land, Merv and Rae have developed a strong attachment to the 1.5ha wetland, and decided to protect it with an open space covenant. The Taranaki Tree Trust and North Taranaki Conservation Corps assisted with restoring the lake's riparian margin by fencing it off and planting appropriate vegetation.

(Adapted from Open Space No 52, August 2001, page 5)

*Photo by Sandy Parkinson.-  
Wairarapa Times Age  
19 November 2001*



# Creative Conservation at Home and Elsewhere

## Chris Thomas, Urban Covenanter

When four sets of Wellington neighbours can agree and work together to achieve protection over the indigenous forest they share, it's worth a party. DU member Chris Thomas and his neighbours live in Hanover St. Wadestown, and their protected bush-clad hillside blocks extend from the street down to the Kaiwharawhara stream, and adjoin Trelissick Park.

The directors of the Queen Elizabeth II National Trust hosted a gathering of local covenanters, MPs, councillors and Trust members to celebrate the completion of four covenants over the continuous stretch of bush in central Wellington, and to recognise the importance of protecting natural remaining open space in urban areas.



Chris Thomas and Geoff Walls  
(QE II director)

Photo: Open Space 52 - August 2001

## What is the Taranaki Tree Trust?

The concept arose in 1990. It was recognised that while landowners might want to protect the indigenous forest on their properties, it was often at the bottom of the priority list for farm expenditure.

Similarly, national organisations such as QE II National Trust had limited funds and prioritised those on a national basis. Regionally and locally significant areas were therefore not being protected through a lack of funds.

The Taranaki Tree Trust was established as an independent regional initiative to assist landowners financially with voluntary mechanisms to protect indigenous forest. It is registered as a charitable trust, making all

donations tax-deductible. It is administered by the Taranaki Regional Council at no cost and works closely with other agencies (most are represented as trustees). Donations have mostly come from industries in the region.

To date the trust has assisted 15 National Trust open space covenants, involving fencing and/or survey costs and supplementary restoration planting. These covenants would not have been able to proceed without the extra support. Other projects include assistance to landowners with riparian enhancement and coastal restoration.

(Adapted from a report by Maggie Bayfield. Open Space 52, August 2001, page 8)



The Banrock Station boardwalk from the air: Photo from the report 'The Banrock Year'.

## The Banrock Year

**Banrock Station was awarded the Australian Prime Minister's Environment Award for Business Leadership in June 2000. A recent report includes these examples of Banrock's 2000 sponsorship work:**

### March

Florida Everglades - with a private foundation, planting Giant Cypress at Loxahatchee Wildlife Refuge

### April

Banrock Station Wine and Wetland Centre - Easter jazz on the deck; art exhibitions, food promotions

### May

Canada - launch of Banrock Station Wetland Foundation Canada; new sponsorship with Wild Bird Trust of British Columbia; Calgary Zoo (captive-breeding programme for Whooping Crane) Royal Ontario Museum (Lake St Clair project); Ducks Unlimited Canada (Nova Scotia work)

UK - Launch of £25,000 sponsorship with Wildfowl and Wetland Trust (founded by Sir Peter Scott in 1947) at Barnes, near London. One of nine visitor centres in UK where people can see wildfowl from around the world.

Sweden - New three-year partnership with Swedish Wetlands Assn (10ha restored wetland)

Netherlands - visit to local partners and Wetlands International (creating open water habitat in the De Weerribben National Park - tour by electric boat)

### June

World Environment Week - PM Award presented; 160 schoolchildren planted 1000 trees in three hours at Banrock Station.

### August

Boardwalk construction began at Banrock Station. Wetland Care Australia, Landmark Communications and the University of South Australia assisting with information displays along the boardwalk.

### September

UK - eg Slimbridge Wetland Centre to view progress on reed beds developed to treat effluent water on the site

### November

New Zealand - Wetland Care New Zealand sponsorship launched, Karori Sanctuary.





William Abel, who runs the Royal Swan Programme, caught on the eat at the Wetlands Field trip.

## Food, Glorious Food

*John Denison, Speaker of the Commons, reminisced in 1899 about a pre-session dinner enjoyed earlier in the century by the 82 year-old prime minister Lord Palmerston, who:*

*'...ate two plates of turtle soup; he was then served very amply to cod and oyster sauce; he then took a pâté; afterwards he was helped to two very greasy-looking entrées; he then despatched a plate of roast mutton (two slices)...there then appeared before him the largest, and to my mind the hardest, slice of ham that ever figured on the table of a nobleman, yet it disappeared just in time to answer the query of the butler, 'Snipe or pheasant, my lord?' He instantly replied 'Pheasant', thus completing his ninth dish of meat in that meal.'*

*'The mutton fish or 'pawa' is very excellent and substantial food for explorers, both European and native...the sea urchin tastes like spider crab, and though very palatable, would be much improved by vinegar and condiments. But the sea anemone is the most recherché...it is the most extraordinary food that ever afforded nutriment to the human body, and must be eaten to be comprehended. In cooking it, care should be taken to keep it apart from other victuals, and in eating the eyes should be kept closely shut. It has a decidedly suspicious appearance, and is not the favourite food of Scotch terrier dogs.'*

- Charles Heaphy



## Andrew Dixon MacMaster Trophy & Grant

This was presented to Taranua College in Pahiatua by Vice-President Neil Candy on 16 November.

During 2000 the college had decided to create a wetland as an educational resource, as part of their small farming operation. They sought the advice of wellknown DU wetland creator Jim Campbell who suggested the project could be worthy of our support by way of the MacMaster Trophy and Grant. This is their application:

'Taranua College recently purchased land adjoining the college grounds for the development of a farm for the Rural Studies faculty. The advantage of being so close to the college is that it can be used right across the subject range in such things as Outdoor Education, Biology, Maths, etc.. with little effort and no travelling. The development of a wetland will add another educational resource to the Rural Education Unit.

'A small working group known as the Waireka Wetland Habitat Committee was set up to plan the development and funding of the project which included members of staff, Board of Trustees and the community. The implementation of the project will rest largely on the pupils and staff (planting and future development).

'The area set aside for the wetland is approximately 1 hectare. A pump will be installed to pump water out of the adjacent river and discharge it into the wetland. It is hoped that two or three ponds will be formed using the existing contours to advantage and the overflow will run back into the same river downstream.

The area requires fencing and planting along with minimal earthworks to define the pond areas. The natural undulations will add variety of depth and shape to the ponds. We have enjoyed the help of Jim Campbell in the initial feasibility stage and intend to seek his help further as we progress.

The committee considers this project a great boost to the college environment and a statement on our position with regard to bio-diversity,

etc, and an ideal outside classroom for the students of Taranua College as well as the primary schools of Pahiatua. The community as a whole will benefit from the development of this wetland also. The Waireka Retirement Home is adjacent to the area and it should prove to be a recreational facility for the residents.'



DU Vice President presents the trophy to Taranua College Principal Phil McCreery.



Sharing and wetland-caring students.

The DU Board considered this was the best application we had ever had for the trophy and grant and that Taranua College would be worthy recipients. Unfortunately, as you can see from the photograph, at the time of the presentation the wetland was still pretty dry. The committee relies on a great deal of goodwill and there had been delays in installing the pump but as soon as that happens the wetland should fill quickly. The pump will handle over 2700 litres an hour and once the wetland is full will operate on a time switch to combat evaporation and maintain water quality. We will hopefully produce updated photographs in the next issue.

DU commends Taranua College and the Waireka Habitat Wetland Committee for their initiative and acknowledges the sponsorship of American DU Life Members Dr. Tony Reiger and Dr. Steven Messerschmidt who funded the \$1000 grant.



# THE PREDATOR FILE

## Pond Predators - Hidden Menace

By Alan Wilks

We all know about cats, rats, stoats and ferrets because we trap them and they can be seen, but is there another that is not so obvious?

About 12 years ago DU member Roger Brooks and I converted a swamp area on a friend's farm in the Wairarapa, and created almost a hectare of open water with a number of islands. We suspected that the pond was supporting more than just ducks and that we could have a few eels to contend with. I contacted member Matt Paku, a commercial fisherman, and he and his son Lincoln (who appeared to be the only one to get wet) came out and set nets for three nights. The catch was a surprising 100kg of short-finned eels totalling about 150! I don't know whether a short-fin eel about a metre long would take a duckling but I do know that 150 of the blighters would be eating duck-feed and in my book that makes them predators.

We would like to hear comment on this topic from any knowledgeable member.

A story I've just heard, which is purportedly true, concerns the chap who caught a surplus of eels and took half a dozen round to a friend. No one was home and as the house was unlocked he put them in the bath with some water to keep them fresh. When he next saw his friend he asked if he had enjoyed the eels and was met with blank stare. Turned out the chap had moved a month before...



Lincoln Paku checks the trap while Purdey supervises. Photo by Alan Wilks



Eel for lunch anyone? Photo by Alan Wilks

*Continued from page 7...*

But they are included in the list of birds covered by the increase in fines. Why, one has to ask oneself?

DU is unique among 'conservation' groups in that its members are made up of both people who hunt and those that do not. We are I think all in agreement that before you can argue about how the resource is to be used it first has to be there, and in a position to sustain use. This applies equally to land, wetlands, birds and game animals.

No one is suggesting that just because bird numbers are up in the Waikato that protection should be dropped in Hawkes Bay where numbers are down. It requires management. The change of status to a gamebird would allow that.

The alternative is to protect those of our members who do shoot from the possibility of a \$100,000 fine for accidentally shooting a grey teal. A first step would be to remove the thousands of nest boxes erected by DU over the past 20 years, and reverse the population trend to the position we had 20 years ago when even seeing a grey teal was a rare sight.

- Graham Gurr

## Reports from a War

The Hawkes Bay Regional Council believes it is winning its war against rooks. The birds, which eat crops and have been accused of attacking sheep, were a difficult enemy. Council biosecurity contract manager of animal pests Trevor Thomas says, 'They would be the most cunning of all the animals we deal with.' The council animal pest strategy calls for rooks to be eliminated from the area north of the Napier-Taupo road, in order to stop them from spreading north. The council is also working to control numbers south of the road. Helicopters have been used in Raupunga, between Napier and Wairoa - while they hover above the nesting trees, workers climb down to poison the nests during the breeding season. The council counts the rookeries every three years, and the last count in 2000 showed a 42% reduction, Mr Thomas said.

(Source: The Dominion, 27 November)

The Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Council is winning the war against rooks - numbers in the region have dropped from 14,000 five years ago to about 7500. Council land manager David Harrison is asking farmers to let him know of rookeries so that they can be poisoned. Control involves pre-feeding with a bread and dripping bait, and toxin is applied once the birds start taking the bait. Helicopters are also used to lay poison paste on the nests and nearby branches. Mr Harrison has advised farmers not to shoot at the nests as the rooks only go elsewhere to nest again. The birds are cunning, scouting for new crops and pasture, and soon notice anything different. He said, 'In one instance recently, we had them taking the bread, but the day we put out the poison one of the workers brought his labrador along. That was enough, the birds immediately left the area.'

(Source: The Dominion, 30 November)

*(Continued on page 14)*





# Flight Ecofile

Seamaster Log 186,  
Tuesday 4th December 2001

## WHY

Again I raise the question - Why are we here?

Technology gives us the ability to bring this (and other parts) of the world into homes and offices and classrooms on an almost immediate basis - through the internet and our website. Photos that we send out each day - either from Seamaster or the Jungle Team - are generally only a few hours old. Be they photos of the river, the wildlife, the plants, the trees, the scenery, the people - and so on.

If we are hot - then you know it is now - not last week or last year. If we are concerned or have a problem, it is now. We are reporting on what we find - not glamorised - just how it is.

We could have come here by commercial plane - and stayed a few weeks - and left. But that wouldn't have given us the essence of the Amazon. To travel by Seamaster means we appreciate the immensity of this water region - and in turn have a feeling for it unlike any other.

Exploring isn't about 'getting there' as fast as possible - it is about the logistics, the planning, the research, the operation of our vessel, the crew, the meals, our equipment, the bureaucracy surrounding us, taking all of us and Seamaster where yachts rarely venture.

The environmental messages that we from time to time become quite energetic over, apply all over the planet - not just the Amazon. The quality of the water and the quality of life in all its infinite forms are critical parts of the overall ongoing health of this planet of ours - not just here, but everywhere.

With nearly 50% of all the peoples of the world now living in towns or cities, we wanted to begin the process of bringing back the appreciation of nature that may be missing from many daily lives: wake / car-bus-train / office-factory-school-supermarket / car-bus-train / home / television / bed.

(The blakexpeditions website, where you will find information, photographs and the regular commentaries he wrote, can be found at: [www.blakexpeditions.com](http://www.blakexpeditions.com))

We want to restart people caring for the environment as it must be cared for, and we want to do this through adventure, through participation, through education and through enjoyment.

The 2x1hour television documentaries about our 3 months in Antarctica are now finished and about to be shown in many countries. Right now our film crew is with other members of blakexpeditions, descending from a mountain climb in the Venezuelan jungle - this to form the second part of our series on the Amazon - part adventure, part educational, part environmental, but also fun. We work closely with the United Nations Environment Programme; their messages are our messages, but formed and transmitted in our own way.

We work closely with Omega - the Swiss timing company who are instrumental to our being able to operate. And the Omega people also firmly believe in what we all want to achieve, even if the top of the environmental awareness mountain that we are endeavouring to climb is out of sight through the clouds right now.

We have support from many companies and individuals - we can never thank you enough - it is great to know that you also care.

To win, you have to believe you can do it.

You have to be passionate about it.

You have to really 'want' the result - even if this means years of work.

The hardest part of any big project is to begin.

We have begun - we are underway - we have a passion.

We want to make a difference.

We hope that you and as many of your friends as possible will join us.

All the best from the blakexpeditions team on board Seamaster and in Venezuela.

Kind Regards

Peter

## It Happened Like This...

### Duckling Protection Squad.

It was morning in mid-spring, I was attending to my coffee addiction in the kitchen and looked out to the lake 70 paces away. The first seven ducklings of the season were out with their mallard parents for their debut in the big world. All was well in Duckland, these tiny dots were skimming the surface and clearly enjoying being off the nest.

Then, worlds collided. In swooped 47 Canada geese from the south. My response was heart-jump with thoughts of No, geese, leave these ducklings alone, this is their first day out! Concurrently another thought said Canada geese would not attack ducklings. Would they? The geese proceeded to encircle the duck family, but leaving a gap to the north, north-east and north-north-west. I was puzzled.



Kourarau Lake near Gladstone, Wairarapa, 12th September 2001. (Photo by Juliet Oliver)

Then in swooped two paradise drakes who positioned themselves in the north-east gap, these followed by two more, filling the gap to the north. They were instantly followed by three mallard drakes, settling in the NNW gap and followed rapidly by five male and female grey ducks to complete this - this what? This circle around the ducklings - but why? I knew by now that all that had flown in during this 20 seconds of frantic activity was not a threat to the ducklings, but I was damned sure that I was not sure why it was not a threat. I was riveted to my kitchen window, nothing in my physical world was important. From the south again, 15 teal flew in and positioned themselves south of the circle, removed yet obviously present; and a group of perhaps 30, well, I call them shoveler ducks, rapidly left the scene in frantic terrier-flight, settling 40 metres away. They engaged in their high-pitched conversation while all in the circle were quiet.

Then it came. Oh, what answer. A hawk swooping in from the south, stooping and hovering ten metres directly above the ducklings. This set the whole circle off in full voice, yet the shovellers quietened. The geese raised their necks at the hawk, the mallards and greys performed frantic circle swimming and the hawk dropped. The ducklings? I was impressed. As soon as the hawk dropped, the ducklings dived and stayed under water as the geese moved in to a tighter protection circle, screaming at the hawk. The hawk ascended, ducklings surfaced and this scenario continued for at least a minute. I was spellbound.

Then it all stopped. The hawk, after perhaps nine thwarted attempts to take ducklings, flew off in its hawkish oh-so-superior way. My heart stopped pounding and I breathed again. The geese swam slowly back to the south of the lake; the paradise males flew back to their females, the mallards and greys stayed. The ducklings and their parents just got on with their day. It was over.

I was truly amazed at how and why the water species immediately moved to protect their own close-knit community from a major threat by a member of the air community. Such are the lessons for the humans who have lost a sense of community.

- Roger Simpson, Hinewaka, Kourarau Lake, 2001



# *In Memory of HUIA*

*The last confirmed sighting of the huia, one of New Zealand's ancient wattlebirds, was in the Taranaki ranges on 28 December 1907. It is now generally accepted as being extinct. But named for this bird - sacred to the Maori and later sold into silence by fashion and greed - is a new database being developed at Massey University as a tool for wildlife conservation management.*

The huia probably dated back to before New Zealand was separated from Gondwana. It was the only bird in the world with a totally differently bill for male and female. The female used her long, scimitar-shaped bill to probe the crevices in rotting logs for insects and huhu grubs after the male had hammered the logs apart with his shorter, stouter bill. Early observers like Buller described pairs hunting together in life-long partnerships. Another of its remarkable features was a long glossy-black tail, each feather tipped with a broad white band. It would often spread its tail for balance on still-standing rotting tree trunks.

It was *tapu* to the Maori, above all other forest birds, and only those of chiefly rank could wear its tail feathers. Though its range was limited to the densely forested valleys of the Taranaki, Ruahine, Rimutaka and Kaimanawa ranges, the feathers were presented from tribe to tribe all over the country as signs of great honour, and kept in intricately carved boxes or waka huia. The birds were hunted in very limited numbers only for this purpose - the threat did not come until Europeans arrived, and some of the dangers affected most native birds. Any foraging birds were vulnerable to stoats and cats, and the reduction of forest habitats, especially mature forest which provided the old decaying trees the huia needed, produced further pressure. But it managed to survive in densely-wooded higher areas.

Its striking beauty was its downfall. It was a large bird (male 45cm, female 48cm) and the waxy orange wattles at the base of its bill contrasted brilliantly with the iridescent blue-black plumage. Bird fanciers among the settlers realised that collectors and museums overseas would be keen to display specimens. Several thousand were swiftly sent to taxidermists everywhere. The plunder had begun.

A quiet and curious bird, unaccustomed to enemies, the huia was easy to kill. Mimicking its soft flute note was enough to lure it close enough to shoot. Buller described their call as 'a soft clear whistle'; also a loud whistling note of higher pitch and various chuckling and whining notes. Between 1840 and 1890 many birds were killed, and Buller noted in 1892 that it was already becoming rare. This however did not deter him from shooting the only one he saw on a trip into the ranges behind Waikanae.

Maori people were the first to become concerned at the decline of their sacred bird. In the 1880s Manawatu and Wairarapa chiefs began a movement to conserve them by placing a *tapu* on the Taranaki Ranges - no more huia were to be killed there. The Governor of NZ, the Earl of Onslow, named his new-born son Huia and responded to the chiefs' call by protecting huia in the Ruahine Ranges. He then persuaded the government to issue an edict forbidding the taking of huia throughout the country. Sanctuary islands were established during the 1890s, but arguments between government departments about the scheme caused it to fail. As the selected islands were infested with mammalian predators, it would probably have failed in any case.

Then the Duke and Duchess of York visited New Zealand in 1901. During one event a high-ranking Maori woman took a huia feather from her hair and placed it in the band of the Duke's hat, indicating that he was regarded as a great chief. This graceful gesture then caught the colonial imagination - suddenly it was fashionable to wear huia feathers in one's hat, and their price soared to as much as £5 each. The chiefly and official edict against killing the birds was ignored

under relentless commercial pressure. A last-ditch effort to invoke government protection floundered in 1903, when the Solicitor-General ruled that no law existed to protect feathers.

After the huia was pronounced extinct in 1908, many unofficial sightings were made until 1922, in an area well within the known range of the bird, but none was investigated. \*

So the huia has gone and the failure to protect this precious bird is a tragedy in the history of this country's wildlife conservation. With the development of good management plans the extinction of other endangered New Zealand species can hopefully be prevented. The huia might be gone, but it is a very good symbol, reminding us of what we should not allow to happen again.

*Adapted from the article "The Story of Huia" The Development of a Database as a Wildlife Conservation Management Tool' by Paul Prosée BVSc CBC, in Kokako, the Wildlife Society of NZ Veterinary Assn bulletin, October 2001.*

(\*Nelson writer Perrine Moncrieff described the huia as if it still existed, in the fifth 'extensively revised' edition of her book 'New Zealand Birds and How to Identify Them'.)



*Huia pair, female in foreground.*

*(Illustration by Elaine Power; from Collins Field Guide - Birds of New Zealand, published by HarperCollins. ISBN 1-86950-107-1)*

**Huia, the New Zealand Wildlife Health and Disease Database**, was set up in 1998 at Massey University. Huia now contains over 1200 records and is becoming a useful tool for conservation management, providing an inquiry and reporting service for wildlife managers and veterinarians, aiding case management and the development of wildlife health strategies and guidelines.



## Pest control is not Just a Game

Forest & Bird considers it inappropriate that the Minister of Biosecurity has launched a new lobby group that includes organisations opposed to the control of conservation pests and TB vectors.

Forest & Bird spokesperson Sue Maturin says the Hon Jim Sutton, as Minister of Biosecurity and Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, should not be associated with such a group.

Ms Maturin says that the lobby group 'Game and Forest' is a coalition of hunting organisations that includes deer stalkers, game estates, hunting guides, the Safari Club International and the Deer Farmers Association. Feral deer spread bovine TB, an agricultural disease which the Animal Health Board spends \$54 million each year to control. Deer, pigs, thar and chamois are all pests just like rats, possums, stoats, and ferrets. Like possums, deer carry bovine TB and are a threat to agriculture, human health and conservation. Deer hunters, in their efforts to protect their hobby, have been frustrating possum control programmes and Animal Health Board operations, stopping the Department of Conservation and regional councils from undertaking proper pest control, and illegally releasing deer. Deer must be controlled to protect our native biodiversity and prevent the spread of disease to livestock. Hunters don't kill enough deer to keep our native forests healthy, and recreational hunting alone is not a suitable pest control option.

### For further information contact:

Sue Maturin Phone: 03 477 9677 (work)  
025 222 5092 (mobile) Email:  
suem@earthlight.co.nz

(Source: Forest and Bird Press release November 2001)

## Forest and Birders Send Pests Packing

Rats, stoats, cats, possums and goats need to be extremely wily to escape the dedicated team of volunteers at work in Eastern Taranaki.

The South Taranaki branch of F&B is into the fourth year of a major pest eradication programme in the Collier and Lintott (now Dickson) covenant areas at Lake Rotorangi. Large numbers of pests have been destroyed by poisoning, shooting and trapping, including over 1000 possums. One disturbing revelation from the exercise was the number of wild cats, with about 20 trapped in two years. The adjoining covenant areas (total 358ha) were the first to be registered in Taranaki, and this animal control will only improve the already excellent forest regeneration and quality. The project was also supported by the Taranaki Electricity trust and Lottery Grants Board.

(Adapted from an article by Neil Phillips, in Open Space 52, August 2001, page 7)

# Clippings

## Farmers Want Proof that Cows Pollute

Dairy farmers want proof that cows are polluting lowland waters before the Government gets too involved in looking at remedies. The Government has set up an informal group representing the dairy industry, regional councils and the Ministries of Environment and Agriculture.

Fish and Game, which represents recreational anglers, claims that cows cause pollution by trampling stream beds and banks and through their faeces.

Chairman of Dairy Farmers New Zealand Charlie Pedersen says the government should first establish that a problem exists. He says farmers would then want evidence that the dairy industry is creating it. He says dairy farmers regard Fish and Game as a self-interest group, with no interest in a wider perspective of the dairy industry and its economic benefits. Mr Pedersen says that very few dairy farms have streams running through them, and that only a few farmers with streams would be behaving in a way that harmed the environment.

(Source: IRN 21 November 2001)

## Biodiversity Outside Public Conservation Lands

### An update on Government progress

While the network of public conservation lands is critical to protecting indigenous biodiversity, many types of habitats are only found on private land (eg lowland and coastal forest remnants, wetlands and lowland grasslands). Some of these areas are legally protected, while others are sustained through voluntary initiatives and the day-to-day management decisions of many landowners. But despite these efforts, our indigenous biodiversity is still in decline. In December 2000 the Government announced a package of initiatives to address these issues. Many agencies have worked towards implementing these.

### Funds

Over five years \$3.6m was committed to providing information and advice to land managers, in order to raise awareness, encourage biodiversity conservation and provide practical advice.

Over five years \$6.5m was committed to improving biodiversity on private land by providing financial assistance for pest and weed control, fencing and restoration projects.

Several organisations were asked to nominate members to the allocation committee, including QEII National Trust, Nature Heritage Fund, Nga Whenua Rahui, Local Government NZ and Landcare Trust.

The Ministry's Sustainable Management Fund will provide \$1.1m over three years for Action Bio-Community, which Environment Minister Marion Hobbs launched at Wellington's Karori Sanctuary on 22 November. Local Government NZ proposed the three-year project, which will support community participation in local projects.

**Contacts:** Elizabeth Eastmure (Ministry for the Environment) ph 04 917 7541 or John Morton (DOC) ph 04 471 3214

(Source: Environment Update October 2001)

## Otorohanga Kiwi House

Kiwi House received DOC permission to release kiwi into Warrenheip, a 16ha private reserve near Cambridge. It is totally enclosed by a 2.4km pest-proof fence, and is the first 'mainland island' from which all mammalian pests have been removed. Mt Maungatautari (3500 acres) is the next reserve to be enclosed in the Cambridge area. Initially, Northern Brown Kiwi, Brown Teal, NZ Robin and the Mahoeui Weta are being considered for release into this reserve.

(Source: NZ Conservation Group newsletter September 2001)

## Improving Water Quality and Managing Land Effectively

A comprehensive practical guide on managing land near rural waterways is a significant step towards improving stream water quality. 'Managing Waterways on Farms' sets out the options available to improve poor water quality. The guide includes useful case studies, practical advice on how to improve water quality and tips on restoring vegetation. It is available in print or from the Ministry's website at [www.mfe.govt.nz](http://www.mfe.govt.nz)

(Source: Environment Update, Sept-Oct 2001)



Cygnets on Trevor Hughes' Pond at Te Pohue.  
Photo by Hadden Francis Lowry Studio,  
Hastings.



## Shopping

### NOSLOC FEEDERS



The Nosloc feeding system has been developed in New Zealand by Dennis Colson of Te Kaitiaki. The feeders are suitable for duck feeding and free range feeding. Of most interest to DU members will be the duck and pheasant feeders. Different nozzles are available for feeding grains such as wheat and barley or for feeding maize. Other sizes of nozzle are available for feeding pellets to ostrich and emu. The nozzles are made of galvanised steel and will not rust or break from use.

Each feeder requires a waratah and bucket (20 litre) which you supply. Larger drums can be used for the system but require additional brackets and waratahs.

The nozzle, either parallel for maize or spiral for wheat and barley, and a waratah mounting bracket are supplied.

Nozzles are \$26.25 each (please advise spiral or parallel) and brackets \$26.95 each.

### The Poem

#### Inversnaid

This darksome burn, horseback brown,  
his rollrock highroad roaring down,  
in coop and in comb the fleece of his foam  
flutes and low to the lake falls home.

A windpuff bonnet of fawn-froth  
turns and twindles over the broth  
of a pool so pitch-black, fell-frowning,  
it rounds and rounds despair to drowning.

Degged with dew, dappled with dew  
Are the groins of the braes that the brook treads through,  
wiry heathpacks, flitches of fern,  
and the beadbonny ash that sits over the burn.

What would the world be, once bereft  
of wet and wildness, let them be left,  
O let them be left, wildness and wet;  
long live the weeds and the wilderness yet.

- Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-89)

*How about sending a favourite (not too long) poem which says something about the DU world? Include original ones - mallard ballads, goose verse, muddy idylls, even swan songs... Have a go, be a dabbler!*

### 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.

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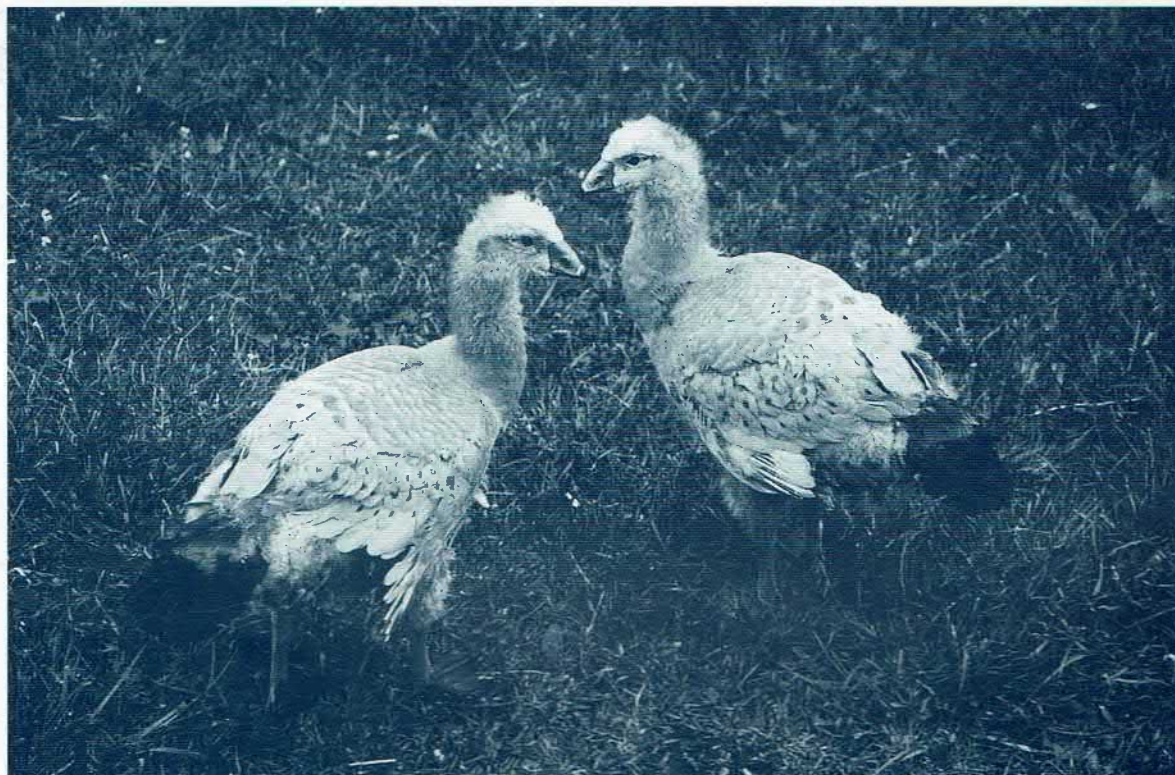


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*Cape Barren Goslings at Stoney Oaks Wildlife Park. Photo: Gail Simons.*

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