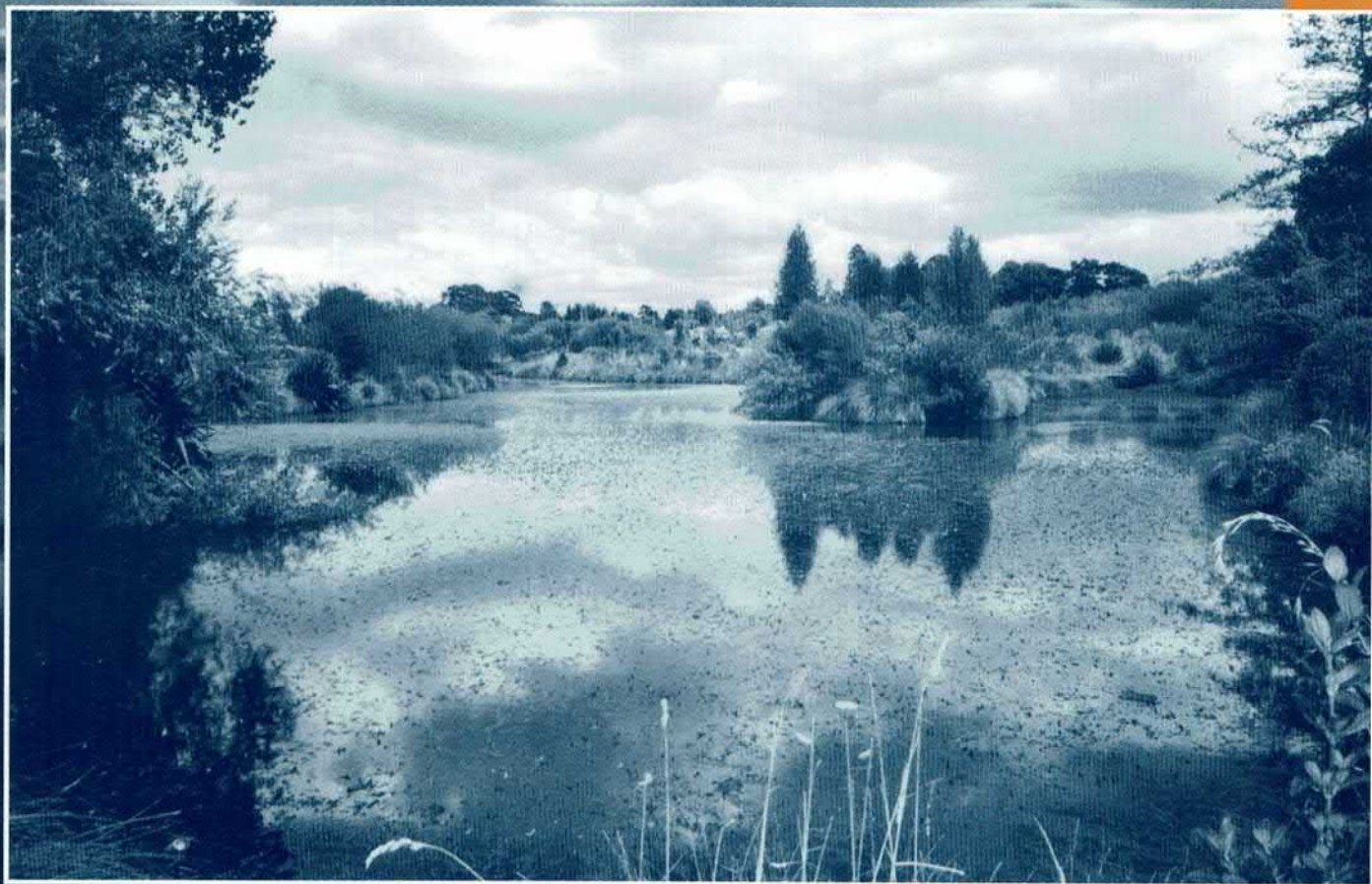


Flight

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2003

ISSUE 115



DUCKS UNLIMITED NEW ZEALAND INC.

www.ducks.org.nz

For Wetlands and Waterfowl.

29th Annual Conference

18-20 July 2003

Regal Geyserland Hotel, 424 Fenton Street, Rotorua.

Only 35 rooms have been reserved for the Friday and Saturday nights. It would be helpful if members would indicate their interest as soon as possible, so that we can confirm with the hotel.

Full Registration of \$80 per person includes the AGM and morning tea, a fabulous wetland bus tour, lunch and wine tasting, Saturday night dinner and auction. (Other meals are not covered in the registration fee.)

Room deposit: \$50 per person.

Saturday night dinner and auction only: \$40 per person.

Send your registration and payment to:

P.O. Box 9795, Newmarket, Auckland.

Conference inquiries: Graham Gurr phone 09 489 5337

Note: The full conference programme will be published in Flight's July issue.



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 in 1991 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 and Bird and regional councils.

Taking Care of Wetlands

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

Ashhurst Domain Wetland - Manawatu
Camm Brown Teal Wetland - Northland
Home Lagoon - Wairarapa
Karori Sanctuary Wetland - Wellington
Magill Wetland - Reporoa
Mana Island Brown Teal Wetland
Pearce Wetlands - Wairarapa
Sinclair Wetlands - Otago

For further information, please contact:

William Abel - Director, Wetland Care
New Zealand, phone 04 478 4335.

From the Flight Desk

Isn't it amazing the way deadlines come around so fast. I hope you like the new look on Flight's cover? Thank you to those who sent material or contacted me about it - I hope I can thank others at another time? Please tell me if I'm telling you things the mass media have already told you - and tell me if you'd like to see debates about 1080, RMA, GST, OIC, MRI, STV, STDs, WAR, the rising dollar, hospital waiting lists, air points, knowledge versus wisdom etc, in Flight. In the meantime we try to please with a selection of items that you may find interesting, useful or entertaining.

Flight needs some of your best anecdotes and photos from the season for the July issue, so please send me (details on page 3)

anything you think Flight readers might enjoy. The extract from Major Wilson's book on page 10 might inspire you.

Have you thought about keeping, or do you keep scrapbooks for your wetland and waterfowl material? They are a cheap and simple way to look after clippings, jottings, old documents (put them in a plastic pocket if they're fragile), copies of photos etc. With DU's 30th birthday next year, and just because it's a Good Thing for the DU archives, we'll be scouring the country for interesting material for a special issue of Flight, starting now - so please let Alan Wilks or me know of anything you think should be in it. We will be contacting people as well, so do start thinking about it soon...

INSIGHT

Neil Candy
President

There is a line of a song that says 'Sisters are doing it for themselves'. Late last year Ken Cook, Jim Campbell, William Abel and I journeyed to Hawkes Bay to see people doing their thing. In these cases the 'it' is creating wetlands, on their own, happy to fund the projects, do the hard work and reap the benefits. All they wanted from DU was confirmation that they were on the right track. Some of the wetlands we viewed were huge, where previously no water had existed, and it is a credit to those involved for the creation of these wonderful areas.

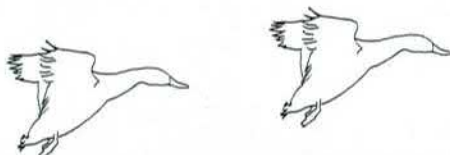
We took a holiday break to the South Island, and while in Christchurch we were privileged to have a look through Peacock Springs. Anne Richardson is doing a superb job breeding whio. She had seven ducklings on hand while we were there, and the chance to be in their enclosure and have them pecking at your shoes was something special. Anne showed us all around the refuge including the kaki (black stilt) and shore plover aviary. As the metal quarry is used up, suitable areas are flooded, creating a huge area under water. As mentioned in the last Flight a new aviary is also to be built.

One highlight was to get up close and personal with a mute swan. This guy is renowned for his disagreeable disposition, this includes attacking ride-on lawn mowers and passing concrete trucks. While standing admiring this fine specimen he decided to charge. I have never seen my kids move so fast, they were back in the car with the doors locked well before Julie and I could get in. Luckily for us he didn't make it up the bank.

The AGM this year is at Rotorua and we have booked the Regal Geyserland Hotel overlooking Whakarewarewa. As President they have promised me the room with the best view of the thermal area but after that, first to book gets the next best view. See you there.

Regards

Neil.



CONTENTS

Special Features

Pateke Update	7
World Wetlands Day 2003	8
Sand Country Sessions	10

Regular Features

Our People	4
DU News	5
Bird Talk	7
In Flight - Predators	10
Flight Ecofile	11
From the Far Side	12
Shopping	15

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 photograph: Millennium Reserve, Masterton. Photograph: Alan Wilks

Flight is published by:

Ducks Unlimited New Zealand Inc.

ISSN 1173-2776

P.O. Box 9795, Newmarket, Auckland, New Zealand

Deadline for all copy and illustrations, Flight 116: 15 May

Flight Advertising Rates (excluding GST)

Full page \$224, half page \$112, quarter page \$56, eighth page \$28. Waterfowl adverts are free to members. Please contact the editor with any suggestions or to book a space.

Contributions from members and other readers, including photographs, are welcome.

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Printer: Lamb-Peters Print,
106A Main Street,
Greytown.

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OUR People



Ross Hood

Ross Hood

Born in Levin, Ross grew up at Koputaroa and was educated at Horowhenua College. He and his wife Alice have four children. He has been a DU member for 10 years.

Ross has several farms totalling 200ha, and has been a dairy and beef farmer all his life. His interests include all forms of fishing, shooting, tramping and boating.

He has been involved in wetland development and protection for longer than he can remember, especially with challenging councils!

He developed several large ponds on the farms over 30 years ago and has an ongoing

programme of creating water and ponding systems to enhance and protect water quality.

He has been a long-time member of the Wellington Acclimatisation Society including involvement with breeding programmes. Ross says of DU that he enjoys belonging to an organisation that actively completes projects, rather than just discussing and paying lip service to wetland and waterfowl protection and management. He admires DU as an organisation which is not afraid to put its money where its mouth is, and is prepared to stand up to statutory managers of wetlands when necessary.

Good on you, Ross.

The Maunsells

Pam and Brian have been members for six years and are keen supporters, their faces becoming familiar at conference weekends and chapter functions.

Pam was born in Christchurch, educated at Rangi Ruru and Craighead, and then worked as a secretary. Brian, born in Masterton and educated at Hadlow and Wanganui Collegiate, has farmed all his working life, breaking in and developing a property near Tinui east of Masterton.

Now semi-retired on 37 acres closer to town, they have built an award-winning house there. Planning, design and architecture are some of Pam's many interests which also include landscaping, native flora and wildfowl.

Both take a great interest in their family of two girls and a boy and Brian enjoys his workshop and golf. They have developed a wetland close to the house and are trying to breed exotic ducks (see below).



Brian and Pam Maunsell

The Oakdale Wetland

Seven years ago before building the new house, Pam and Brian created two adjacent ponds, with one flowing into the other. Using a digger and Brian's Caterpillar D4 bulldozer, they converted a wet and useless gully into a 5m deep 0.5ha wetland with islands. It is fenced and they have an ongoing control programme using Timms, tunnel and cage traps.

The water source is a natural catchment and Pam has planted the area extensively with natives, producing good nesting cover. The wetland attracts wild mallard and grey teal, and they have pinioned grey teal, scaup, mandarin and carolina.

Now Pam and Brian can overlook the ponds from the house - they enjoy the beauty and their interest in wildlife has increased.



Oakdale Wetland

DU Reports

Whio

The breeding season is over and we have 12 ducklings on the ground. All ducklings are now at Peacock Springs being hardened up for their release in early April. They will all get health and behaviour checks to make sure that they are suitable for release.

I would like to thank all the breeders for the work that they put into this endangered species over the last year. A special thanks to Staglands for the remarkable pair which have produced 28 ducklings over 10 years. The female is now 12 years old.

We hope that in the coming year we will get some wild birds into the breeding programme to help with our inbreeding.

You never know what is going to happen...Nic Peet at DOC Wanganui sent this email:

'Juvenile returns home....

Looks as though imprinting on natal rivers may occur earlier than we thought...Whilst preparing to catch some birds for translocation from the Manganui-a-te-ao to Mt Taranaki, yesterday we found a bird released as a juvenile on Mt Taranaki last January back on the Manganui-a-te-ao within 500m of its original capture site. The bird was last seen on Mt Taranaki in early July. All birds were caught as class IV ducklings just on the point of fledging. This has happened with adult birds but the first time with juveniles.'

- Peter Russell

More in Bird Talk, page 8.

Gretel

As our nest box programme is fast approaching the 30 year mark it is perhaps time to reflect on the success of this innovative scheme.

Using the boxes that are regularly monitored, we have established that the occupancy rate is well above 70%, and the clutch size averaging eight eggs, with around 50% hatching success.

Teal, being a rather shy bird akin to grey duck and shoveler, are not often seen by the public. Only ornithological and hunting types are aware of teal in their select

habitat. Many hunters are reporting a vast increase in grey teal during the past five years, and in the Waikato teal are regarded as the second most popular duck after mallard. However these facts tell us little unless we can increase our research to an acceptable level.

We began last duck hunting season with a very small trial to try and establish the number of teal in New Zealand. A few selected hunters counted the mallard and grey teal seen on each day they were out. From six returns we found 14,144 mallards and 1847 grey teal sighted, teal being about 13% of the total.

Fish and Game and DOC have been banding waterfowl for the past 50 years, and have suggested that the total mallard population is about one million birds. It would therefore be logical to assume that 13% of this number would put our grey teal population at 130,000, a vast improvement on 20,000, the number given to me by the former Wildlife Service (now DOC) before we started Project Gretel.

However, to make any survey meaningful would require the assistance of many more helpers, and I am seeking the support of all interested people who would be prepared to do a spot of field-work.

- Jack Worth

Please contact Jack if you can help, phone 07 846 3808.

Pateke

The decline in numbers at Great Barrier and Mimiwhangata appears to have halted, which hopefully gives brown teal recovery a strong platform for the future. This success is attributed to a strong predator control programme and the work of strongly focused DOC staff working in these areas.

The large scale release is now planned for June this year, either at South Okarito in Westland or Moehau, Coromandel. There is some concern about South Okarito due to the heavy mast season with the attendant explosion of mustelids. This factor may cause a switch to Moehau.

Ducks Unlimited has funded a fabulous interpretative sign for the Brown Teal

release on Tiri Tiri Matangi Island. The sign will be erected on the pathway just as you disembark from the ferry - a prominent site with prominent referral to Ducks Unlimited.

- Ossie Latham

(Chairman of Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi Carl Hayson said in his letter of thanks, 'The information and pictures are of a high standard. I believe the sign will be of great importance for informing the large number of the public that visit the island of the plight of this species, and although Tiri's population will always be small, the advocacy for the teal is of great advantage.' -Ed.)

See more on pateke in Bird Talk, page 7

Wetland Care

Last November Neil Candy, Jim Campbell, Ken Cook and I went to Havelock North, where Jim and Ken advised a group wanting to develop a wetland on a 600ac organic farm below Te Mata Peak. Andrew and Heather Martin are the farm's American owners. We then went to Black Beach at Porangahau to assist James Hunter, who has some spectacular wetlands at the back of the farm, eight kilometres from his house. The family has been there since 1856, and the farm has a network of watering holes that James has developed to double as waterfowl breeding areas. They are mostly fenced off and ready for planting. He is doing a great job.

We have received an application from Murray and Lois Tapp for an impressive development on their piece of land in Northland. Murray instigated and managed the Camm Wetland specifically for brown teal.

Royal swan

A good year, to date I am aware of 14 cygnets available, but there will be more. I have firm orders for seven pairs and two singles, now all we need is an even gender break in the cygnets!

-William Abel

Board Business

Captive Breeders

To facilitate the exchange of information we are in the process of compiling a list of breeders of wildfowl and game birds including ornamentals.

Please contact William Abel, phone 04 586 2752, 316 Maungauraki Rd., Lower Hutt, or email abelfam@paradise.net.nz

Business Membership

The new business membership category is targeted primarily at businesses that would benefit from our organisation's expertise in developing wetlands - eg family operations considering enhancing their properties through the retirement of steep gullies which are hazardous to stock, and converting them into productive waterfowl areas.

See 'Dams, Ducks and Dollars' on page 11 in Flight 109 October 2001, for some encouraging thoughts on this -Ed.

Firearms Licences

Current licences began to expire on 31 October 2002. You need to check your expiry date as no-one will be notified and it is up to you to apply for a new licence. You can apply at a police station up to two months before your licence expires. It costs about \$125 and includes a firearms safety booklet. The cost will cover all existing endorsements on your current licence, ie A, B, C, D, E.

You will have a new photo taken and will need to pass a 10-question test on firearms safety (if you fail you will be asked to attend a mountain safety course and then re-sit the test).

If you let your licence expire, you will have to apply for a new one at a cost of \$250, and supply references etc.

The NZ Trust for Conservation Volunteers Inc.

NZTCV was established to help co-ordinate the volunteer resources needed for environmental and conservation projects. It acts as a broker in New Zealand and for incoming and outgoing travellers wishing to volunteer their services. The Trust has a strong commitment to helping preserve our valuable natural resources. DU has agreed to be included on their database.

Contact Geraldine by Ph: 09 489 8819
E-mail: geraldinejane@xtra.co.nz
or visit their website at
www.conservationvolunteers.org.nz

The Tim Harington Memorial Plaque

Tim was a DOC field officer based in Masterton and a keen supporter of DU. He had held the position of local Chapter Chair.

In 1995 he was tragically drowned with two others on Lake Wairarapa, while pursuing the aspect of his job he loved the most, his involvement with wetlands.

His colleagues at the Field Centre in Masterton have established a Tim Harington Memorial Garden there, and we planted a kowhai, which is thriving despite the rabbits. We have just installed a memorial plaque. There is a DOC sign noting that it is the Tim Harington Memorial Garden.

Tim, you are not forgotten.

New Zealand Plant Conservation Network

This organisation has been formed by Mike Oates, Manager Natural and Botanic Areas for Wellington City Council, and Department of Conservation plant ecologist John Sawyer. Their vision is that no indigenous plant species will become extinct or be placed at risk as a result of human action or indifference, and that the rich, diverse and unique plant life of New Zealand will be recognised, cherished and restored. Their mission is to educate people about New Zealand's native plant life and to promote indigenous plant conservation.

We feel this is a worthwhile initiative and have asked to be kept informed.


For more information, contact NZ plant Conservation Network, PO Box 16-102, Wellington South.

IN MEMORY OF

TIM

CONSERVATIONIST

AND GOOD FRIEND



DUCKS UNLIMITED N.Z. INC.

Auckland Chapter.

A fun evening has been arranged for 22 April, 7-10pm at Sylvia Park. Duck-calling competition and Childrens Camo Makeup competition followed by a fund-raising auction of fabulous donated and imported items. Cash bar and food available, bring the family for a fantastic evening out.

For more details contact Steve Rice at home, ph 09 528 4560.

Vandals Vanquished

In Flight last April we reported that the magnificent viewing platform overlooking the wetland development at Ashhurst Domain was torched by vandals. We are happy to report that the structure has been replaced and we trust it will not attract further mindless destruction.



The new platform at Ashhurst Domain

Bird Talk



Auckland Zoo's Native Waterfowl Display

Glen Holland, Life Sciences Manager at Auckland Zoo, reports on their new development.

Approximately eighteen months ago our sealions were moved to their superb new facility, which left their old pool available for a native waterfowl display. The enclosure together with the walk-through Glade aviary and other open areas of water currently hold paradise shelduck, blue duck, spare male brown teal and a separate breeding pair, shovelers, scaup, grey teal, grey duck and mute swan. To date we have bred five shovelers, six grey teal, five brown teal and thirteen scaup. The species that are not part of DOC breeding programmes have been left free-flighted. Our new pairing with blue duck resulted in two clutches with at least one egg showing signs of fertility and early embryonic death so we are hopeful that once more settled they will produce in the season ahead. The Zoo's breeding pair of mute swan were reaching the end of their days and with that in mind we acquired, through DU, a new young male for a young female we had bred. One of the older birds passed on and the young pair laid their first clutch of infertile eggs - hopefully they will produce in the season ahead. We had hoped to discourage our two pairs of carolinas from breeding and took their nest boxes away, only to have them find enough cover to incubate clutches and produce 11 youngsters. All in all, waterfowl are prospering at the Zoo.

Orana Builds New Whio Enclosure

Tara Atkinson has been appointed Head Keeper, NZ Native Section, at Orana Wildlife Park, and will be involved in the planned redevelopment and enhancement of this section. The first priority is the new blue duck enclosure to improve the large walk-through aviary they are housed in.

Tara wrote on 4 March, 'We are delighted to report that four of our five eggs were viable and have hatched and prospered. The eggs were collected from our pair at approx 29 days and transferred to Peacock Springs to finish their time in an incubator. They all hatched well and have since flourished. They have now joined several other youngsters hatched at Peacock Springs, in a pre-release conditioning aviary. I believe that they will soon have their temporary transmitter harnesses attached as they are being isolated before their release in approximately a month's time.

We are all delighted with our progress with blue duck!'

Pateke Update - extracts from Shaun O'Connor's February 003 report.

Karori Sanctuary (Raewyn Empson)

One known breeding pair at Taylor wetland produced five ducklings. There was a swap of males when ducklings were less than 10 days old. Just after this a 10-day-old female duckling was found in death throes some distance from the wetland (necropsy report indicated starvation/exposure and nematodes as cause of death) and three more disappeared over the next three days. One duckling has survived but as yet we have had no success in catching it to sex and band. The new pairing is still together and the breeding male is alone nearby on the lower lake.

One other pair is regularly seen on the upper lake but no evidence of breeding success. The single transmitted female has been regularly monitored - no sign of nesting and now her transmitter is failing.

We plan a survey in March using tapes, will try to catch birds, especially females, and attach transmitters. We are also investigating

supplementary feeding at the Upper lake to see if we can improve breeding up there, but have concerns about sparrows carrying salmonella so need to minimise that risk first.

We have started mallard control and expect that this will be an ongoing requirement.

Tiritiri Matangi (Carl Hayson)

Our attempt to obtain the services of a research student to monitor and conduct a study on the island's teal was unsuccessful. Our current proposal is to invite James Fraser and Fiddich to spend a week on Tiri to catch as many teal as he can find, then weigh and band any unbanded birds and remove the remaining transmitters to be sent back to the Recovery Group. James would then write up a report for the Supporters and the Recovery Group. The dog survey technique will be an annual task in out-years.

We have had some breeding success this season, with at least two fledglings fathered by a new release from last year. The Brown Teal sign sponsored by DU is on the island now, and resource consent has just been given to construct two earth dams at North East Bay for the new wetlands.

Warrenheip (Phil Thomson)

The good news is that the pair living at the bottom culvert (and in whose territory I found duckling tracks in early December) has almost certainly raised one chick to fledging size. On 15 January I found the male on the stream and the female up in the bush in the company of a duck without an active transmitter. The presumed duckling ran off but the duck stayed put in the undergrowth, and I assumed it was hanging around until I had gone. There are still at least 8 teal alive inside the fence. We intend to catch birds in April to remove transmitters and band any youngsters caught, with the help of James Fraser and his search dog Fiddich.

Mana (Jason Christensen)

In short we are now in drought conditions. We are pumping water to some ponds teal are on. Some teal are being fed up when I feed takahe and a pair by my house. One duckling fledged early December. The same pair has four new ones hatched last week. Six teal were seen on another pond two weeks ago. Now down to two.



Pateke at Mana Island. Photo: Jason Christensen

WORLD WETLANDS DAY 2003



Chris Bindon (DU Auckland) supervises as volunteers put in the next post.

The Gathering Place of the Oystercatcher

From the north, Chris Bindon reports: On World Wetlands Day, 2 February, I was involved in a small local wetland project in Auckland City Council's Tahuna Torea reserve. Situated on the Tamaki Estuary, Tahuna Torea (gathering place of the oystercatcher) is a beautiful 25ha reserve comprising native forest, wetland, mangrove lagoon and coastal habitat including a sandspit.

Naturally, a reserve with such diverse habitats also has a diverse range of bird species to match. Well known for the godwits, knots, oystercatchers and other wader species the reserve attracts, it is less well known for species attracted to its wetland. As well as the hordes of mallards, occasional grey duck, paradise shelduck, back swan and pukeko, there has also been the odd sighting of NZ shoveler, grey teal and Australasian bittern. This would not be remarkable but for the fact that suburbia starts only a couple of hundred metres away. Also, regularly present are NZ kingfisher, welcome swallow, harrier, white-faced heron and three or four species of shag. Tahuna Torea's bush also contains a small number of forest bird species.

Tahuna Torea has had a colourful past. Ngati Paoa harvested shellfish, fish and birds from the area in pre-European times. Ngati Paoa were forced to flee Mokoia Pa in 1821 when the area was invaded by Ngapuhi forces. Following European settlement, the site and other land nearby was auctioned in early 1842, followed by the establishment of farms, gardens and

orchards. Today, however, the area is a haven for many species of wildlife.

The well-being of this area is taken care of by the Tamaki Estuary Protection Society. A small group split off from this organisation is the Tahuna Torea Rangers. I was involved in a discussion with this group and Auckland City Council's Parks Volunteer Programme Co-ordinator David Bowden. We decided to put a small number of nesting boxes in the reserve, with the possibility of attracting some grey teal back into the area. We hope they will breed and establish here. David will be the contact person monitoring this site for Project Gretel.

To get the most publicity mileage for both Ducks Unlimited and Tahuna Torea reserve, we decided to hold one of the Rangers working bees and the grey teal nest box project on the same day, World Wetlands Day. The regular jobs on the reserve include general hand weeding, releasing of weeds around planted trees, removal of visitors' litter, and tree planting in the winter months. In the near future there are plans for active predator monitoring and control as a constant aspect of maintenance for the whole reserve.

Before the event, the Council's local publication City Scene ran a positive article by David Bowden, which helped in getting 25-30 eager volunteers for the day's tasks. Fine weather, followed by a BBQ lunch courtesy of Auckland City Council concluded a most positive and successful day for the many volunteers and the environment.

- Chris Bindon, DU Auckland Chapter

In the South, a Private Wetland Opens to the Public

Mid Canterbury DU member Russell Langdon (see Flight 114 page 6) is following his motto and 'doing something about it'. The Riverbridge Nature Centre was opened to the public on World Wetlands Day, 2 February. The 8.3ha restored wetland on the Langdon's Westerfield farm was designed to raise awareness of the value of wetland areas.

Russell and Velma Langdon's property runs next to the south branch of the Ashburton River. They began restoring the wetlands area as a millennium project three years ago. The series of ponds, boggy and open grass areas are covered by a QE II National Trust covenant, so that future landowners will never be able to use the ponds for irrigation. The wetland now acts as an important 'island' or café stop for wildlife travelling north and south.

'If you get the habitat you get the birds in,' says Russell, and the wetland is already attracting a range of birds including black stilt and sandpiper. He plans to release Eastern wekas, putting up 1.5km of netting to keep them in. This will also be a release site for brown teal.

Plenty of cover helps to protect the birds from predators, and Russell has also planted 400 oaks on some of the waste ground beside the river. Their acorns will provide future feasts for pheasants.

An educational centre will also be established at Riverbridge, and Russell and Velma hope the wetland will flourish long into the future.

Source: Rural News, 17 February 2003, page 28.

DU members and their families are welcome to visit Riverbridge. To contact Russell, phone 03 302 5877.

New Conservation Medal Awarded

On World Wetlands Day 2003 the Minister of Conservation, Chris Carter, announced the recipients of Fish and Game New Zealand's 'Gold Medal', when he opened the Flaxmill Wetlands near Dargaville. The Award has been presented this year for the first time. Fish and Game New Zealand will make an award every two years. The recipients of the Fish and Game New Zealand Gold Medal for 2002/03 are Mr David Lawrie and Mr Steve Chapman (Auckland), Mr Reg Cull (Wellington), and Dr John Kent (Christchurch).



Fish and Game officer Matthew McDougall releases a duck at Kaituna Wetlands. The annual survey revealed a bumper crop of 11 juveniles to each adult bird, compared with the average of three or four. Ducks banded in the Bay of Plenty have been seen as far south as Temuka. Photo: John Borren, Bay of Plenty Times, Saturday 1 February 2003.

Fish and Game oversaw 24 events and activities around the country for World Wetlands Day this year. Nationally, the 2003 NZ Game Bird Habitat stamps were launched. Income from the sale of the stamp is used to fund the Game Bird Habitat Trust Board's grants to wetland restoration (see contact details below), and the Fish and Game medal. Other organisations included district and regional councils, Landcare Research, Forest and Bird, NIWA, The National Wetlands Trust, DOC, Iwi, local trusts and community groups - and DU. If you are planning or getting involved in something in your area next year, please let Flight know before the end of October, so that we can mention it in the January 2004 issue.

The New Zealand Game Bird Habitat collection is available from NZ Post Stamps Centre, phone 06 349 1234; fax 06 345 7120, or email enquiry@wgmsc.nzpost.co.nz

Wetlands are Earth's Vital Organs

Wetlands are the earth's 'liver and kidneys' with an incredible capacity to cleanse and store water, participants at a World Wetlands Day celebration at Waikanae's Nga Manu Nature Reserve were told on World Wetlands Day.

Waikato wetland expert Paul Champion emphasised the vital role played by wetlands at an event hosted by Greater Wellington, the Department of Conservation and the Nga Manu Trust, at the site of the largest single remaining remnant of original coastal lowland swamp forest on the Kapiti Coast. Reclaiming land from wetlands once warranted Government support through legislation and it is only in the last 30 years that their importance is being recognised by the general public.

'Cradles of civilisation all started around wetlands. A wetland grass (rice) provides the staple food for 50% of the world's population,' said Mr Champion, of the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA).

The Nga Manu Nature Reserve event, attended by around 60 people, was one of several held nationwide on World Wetlands

No Wetlands, No Water!

In the Waikato, the catch cry of World Wetlands Day was highlighted by a very informative tour of the Whangamarino Wetlands, led by wetland ecologist and Waikato University biological sciences lecturer Keith Thompson. The Whangamarino was chosen for the field trip both because it is a Ramsar-listed wetland and because there is a danger of it being degraded by silt from the nearby seriously polluted Lake Waikare.

All this was made very apparent to the more than 120 people who turned up for the tour.

With logistic support from DOC, Environment Waikato and Mighty River Power, people came away much better informed about the value of wetlands in general, and the Whangamarino in particular.

Fish and Game Auckland/Waikato were involved in the construction of a rock-rubble weir on the Whangamarino. One of Fish and Game's most ambitious and costly projects to improve game bird habitat, it is hoped that the extra metre gained by this retention weir will restore the proportion of permanent swamps in the wetlands to pre-1950 levels. So far the outcome looks good. All-year-round water levels in the wetlands have risen, and this, along with Fish and Game's efforts to remove crack willow and invasive grasses and to re-contour areas to provide water depths for native wetland plants, has seen many of these reappear.

Natives such as burr-reed (*sparganium subglobosum*, a favourite food of waterfowl), kuta (*eleocharis sphacelata*), jointed twig-rush (*baumea articulata*) and several native rushes (*juncus* species) are now more common. A number of bittern have also been sighted in restored areas.

DOC also set fish nets, which on the day had caught a variety of pest fish, whose destructive impact on native freshwater species horrified all present when told of them by Tony Roxborough, DOC Hamilton Conservator.

Architectural concepts for the proposed new National Wetlands Centre at Rangiriri were outlined.

The site has been chosen partly because of its proximity to the Whangamarino and Kopuatai wetlands, and also because it is close to the large urban populations of Auckland and Hamilton.

The National Wetland Trust is responsible for getting the Centre built and is actively seeking members. Anyone wanting to join should send a \$10 cheque with their contact details to:

Treasurer, National Wetland Trust, c/o Postal Centre, Te Kauwhata, NZ.

Excellent background information on wetlands can be found on the NZ Fish and Game Council's website:

www.fishandgame.org.nz

Day which commemorates the signing of the Ramsar International Convention on Wetlands on 2 February 1971. New Zealand became a signatory in 1976 to the intergovernmental treaty which provides the framework for national action and international co-operation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.

The Nga Manu Nature Reserve was established in 1974 to protect a 15ha remnant of the swamp forest that once cloaked the Kapiti coast. The number of bird species supported in the wetland has grown from 26 to 54 in that time. The ultimate aim is to create a forest corridor from the sea to the hills.

A fact sheet produced by DOC for the event is an invitation to tour some of the other Wellington wetland gems including the Pauatahanui inlet, Lake Papaitonga and the Waikanae Estuary. It is available on the DOC website www.doc.govt.nz

People interested in volunteer wetland restoration work can contact Greater Wellington on 0800 496 734 or DOC, or check out the New Zealand Ecological Restoration Network's website www.bush.org.nz



Possum Parasites

Parasites may soon have a role in controlling possum populations according to collaborative research by AgResearch and Landcare Research.

Two and a half years ago the research group released a parasite that lives in the small intestine, to a population of wild possums at a 9ha site. Since then the parasite has spread and infected possums have been found at various sites over the surrounding 5800ha area.

AgResearch scientist Mark Ralston says the aim was to see if the parasite would survive and spread in free-ranging possum populations. Ultimately the group hopes to develop a genetically-modified parasite for use in helping to make possums infertile. Mr Ralston says one advantage is that this parasite only infects possums, and the gene added to establish biocontrol will also only

affect possums - other animal populations will not be put at risk.

The parasite has the potential to work well alongside other control methods such as 1080. It appears that it can spread even in low-density possum populations, and could be introduced before or after a 1080 operation to slow the rate of re-population, delaying a further poisoning programme for up to ten years.

Mr Ralston says that progress will depend on funding and political attitudes to using genetic modification in pest control.

From Rural News, 18 November 2002.

Around the Traps

MAF has sought feedback on the possible banning or restriction of certain pest traps and devices, says a January report in *Straight Furrow*. This was in response to National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee proposals put to the Minister of Agriculture Jim Sutton. The 11-member committee was established thirteen years ago to provide an independent forum for discussion of animal welfare issues.

Under an ISO standard for kill traps, target animals snared must be unconscious in three minutes or less. Bruce Warburton, senior scientist, Landcare Research, says most kill traps don't work that quickly and some mechanisms fail, as was found in the results of tests done last year.

Submissions on the issue were to close in February.

From Straight Furrow, 16 January 2003.

Ferrets in Sights

A ban on keeping ferrets in captivity, proposed in the Biosecurity Amendment Bill, should have a favourable boost at its second reading in Parliament in the next few months. The ferret research, by Landcare's mustelid research ecologist Andrea Byrom, reveals that young ferrets can travel up to 45km from their birthplace by the time they are four months old.

Ferrets can be infected with bovine Tb and the finding poses as yet un-researched questions about whether juvenile ferrets can be infected before they leave the den. If so, they could be capable of creating new foci of infection over a wide area. Further research into whether Tb-infected ferret carcasses eaten by possums or pigs can transmit Tb is under way.

Ms Byrom's research uses radio-collared juveniles released in the Mackenzie Basin, and has shown that one female ferret travelled 45km and 50% of them went more than 5km from their birthplace in four months. Her research paper was reported in the December issue of Landcare Research's journal on vertebrate pest research.

From Rural News, 20 January 2003.

Sand Country Sessions

Thanks to Graham Gurr for the copy of a chapter from 'Fifty Years Farming on Sand Country', a 1959 publication by Major R.A. Wilson, who had farmed crown lease land north-west of Foxton, between Lakes Pukipuki and Kaikokopu in the Manawatu. In this chapter, 'Lake Shooting', he describes the wetland landscapes of the area in the late 1880s and adds extracts from his Game Book. We will print occasional extracts from it, so let's start at the beginning:

'Originally the two lakes at Kaikokopu (which were separated by a sand ridge about ten feet high) were about 300 acres in area and were almost 15 feet deep at the deepest part. There was a prolific water plant growing in the lake which after some difficulty I identified as *potamogeton pectinatus*, known all over the world as a favourite duck food. The water was then too deep for the grey duck to feed on this plant but the black teal, a diving duck, lived in large flocks on the lakes. There were several thousand in the early days, and when Roy McLennan lived at Orua Downs, he and the Strang brothers who were then farming at Moutua, used to open the season with a party. They would line the ridge between the lakes and the black teal would fly backwards and forwards for several hours. Mr Jack Strang said the usual bag was about 400, mostly black teal.

When Mr Dalrymple and I went shooting on the lake about 1895, there was a flock there of about 2000 black teal. When the shooting started the teal would fly across the ridge for half an hour or so, then collect in a flock in the middle of the big lake. Mr Dalrymple had taken a Snider carbine with him and when they settled down he would fire a rifle bullet which would skid across the water between the teal and they would then fly backwards and forwards again for a short time until they finally dispersed into the extensive raupo beds, but did not leave the lake.

There were large numbers of grey ducks as well, but these would soon fly out of range while the teal would ignore the shooters and fly past in range. Needless to say this caused great slaughter and it was not many years before they were all killed out. Since we have been shooting only one small flock of black teal has been observed, though they still breed at Horowhenua Lake, a sanctuary. They are now protected by law but have not increased again.' (To be continued...)

In passing... 'Mr Dalrymple' farmed nearby and was my great grandfather. Kenny, one of his sons, was a hunter too, travelling widely, including to Siberia, in pursuit of big game animals. The family Christmas tree was often set up in his high and antler-studded trophy room, making a memorable impression on a small girl. - Ed.

Water, Water Everywhere?

The water conservation order recommended for the Rangitata River, announced in October 2002 (see item in Flight 114, page 12), is a significant and useful 'line in the gravel' for Canterbury's braided rivers, says Forest and Bird.

'Braided rivers including the Rangitata are rare internationally. A barrage of new irrigation and hydro proposals threatens their landscape, habitat and recreational values,' said Forest and Bird field officer, Eugenie Sage.

The Special Tribunal's draft order would prevent any dams on the main-stem of the river if it is implemented by the Ministry for the Environment.

'The Tribunal's thorough investigation and detailed conclusions highlight the value of the water conservation order process, particularly when Environment Canterbury has not developed a statutory water management plan for the Rangitata,' Ms Sage said.

The Rangitata application is the first water conservation order to be sought under the Resource Management Act 1991. The proposal attracted more than 1100 submissions.

The Rangitata supports over 80 different bird species and 18 species of native fish. Water abstraction changes their habitat. As natural flows are reduced, weeds such as broom and willow encroach on the bare

gravels and shingle beds where birds nest and breed. The weed thickets also provide cover for predators such as feral cats, ferrets, stoats, hedgehogs and rats. The braids of the riverbed that previously isolated breeding islands dry up, allowing access to predators. There are fewer shallow braids for wading birds to feed in, and fish die in cut-off stretches of the river where water temperatures rise.

From a Forest and Bird media release, 30 October 2002.

Saving the Seedbanks

UN-backed experts aim to create an international fund to conserve the world's seed varieties and protect crop diversity from natural disasters, war and other threats, a leading plant geneticist said yesterday.

The experts, backed by the Rome-based UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), will work over the next year to develop the Global Conservation Trust and raise \$260 million to maintain seed banks, many of which are in a precarious state.

'An international body will be created to assign funds to expand and protect the world's gene banks,' said Geoffrey Hawtin, director general of the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute, an independent group that promotes conservation of seeds to aid research into

new food varieties and help assure future food supplies.

About 1470 gene banks exist around the world to conserve the world's seeds, but Hawtin warned that a possible war in Iraq could threaten seed banks in the region. 'There is a possible direct threat, depending on how things go,' he told Reuters. 'If there is a large-scale breakdown of law and order, there would be a breakdown of the gene banks. The Middle East is the centre of origin for critical crops such as wheat, barley, peas and lentils. All countries are interdependent when it comes to agriculture and when one gene bank fails, the loss reverberates around the world,' he said.

In November 2001 FAO member states approved a landmark treaty to protect the world's crop varieties.

So far around \$25 million of the targeted \$260 million has been pledged from the United States, Switzerland, Egypt and Colombia, the United Nations and others. Mr Hawtin said the funds would be used to keep seed banks operating, and to duplicate seed stores in different countries to ensure they are not lost to natural disasters or conflict.

According to FAO, over time some 10,000 plant species have been used for human food and farming, but now only 120 species provide 90 percent of human food supplied by plants.

Reuters report from www.planetark.org



Spring. Photo: Gail Simons

it happened like this...

Spring's Story

Our beautiful black swans Grace and Favour built their nest and Grace laid six precious eggs. They took turns incubating them over five weeks, then it all began to happen.

The first one rolled out of the nest just as it was hatching and died, not a good start for their new family. Grace stayed glued

to the nest and a few hours later an adorable little cygnet poked its head from under her wing. The proud parents were found sailing round the pond the next morning with their one little cygnet in tow. I rushed to the nest and found four stone cold eggs. Curiosity got the better of me. I broke the first three open, only to find the cygnets dead in their shells. It was heartbreaking. The same scenario greeted me when I opened the last one.

Then to my amazement it blinked. I thought I might have imagined it so took another look. Its eyes were clear, not clouded over like the others. Then it blinked again. I rushed it inside, put it on a warm hot water bottle and hung a light bulb above it to get some warmth into its little body. A few hours later it was moving but couldn't walk or hold its head up. I started to wonder if I was being cruel trying to keep it alive, but something said persevere.

The next few days were critical. I checked its temperature, dipped its beak in water, force fed it and massaged its neck. A few days later it took a new lease of life and I now have a new challenge, a gorgeous baby swan to hand rear. 'Spring' as I named her is doing extremely well and giving us all a lot of enjoyment, and the moral to this story - where there's life there's hope.

- Gail Simons

From the Far Side

United Kingdom

Britain Declares Open Season on the Ruddy Duck

[This headline appears to be irony-free.]

The British government declared open season on the ruddy duck this week, saying it wanted to wipe out the sexually voracious fowl.

Originally from north America, the ruddy duck was introduced to Britain in the 1940s and began breeding like wildfire. Now it has gained a foothold on mainland Europe, cross-breeding with the native white-headed duck and threatening it as a species, particularly in Spain.

A report for the government suggested the ruddy duck could be removed from Britain within a decade and that shooting was the most effective means, Wildlife Minister Elliot Morley said in a statement that made ugly reading for duck lovers.

'Eradication of the ruddy duck in the United Kingdom is the preferred outcome,' Morley said. 'Without action in the UK, the survival of the white-headed duck as a distinct species would be severely compromised.'

But welfare group Animal Aid said the white-headed duck's problem was not the amorous attentions of its feathered cousin but gun-toting Spanish hunters. 'White-headed ducks have been brought to the point of extinction because they have been mercilessly hunted in Spain and their habitat destroyed,' director Andrew Tyler said. 'Mating with the robust ruddy duck is the white-headed duck's means of survival. We should leave them to it and not compound our near-destruction of one species with the destruction of another.'

From www.planetark.org 5 March 2003



Graphite drawing by Paul Martinson

To Duck or Not to Duck...

Inventor Mike Madden suffered whiplash when a squirrel landed on his head when he was out road-testing a bird-feeding hat in West Yorkshire woodland. A large grey squirrel spied the nuts on the feeding tray mounted on his headgear, leapt from a tree and landed with such force that Mr Madden, 48, was knocked to the ground and injured his neck. He had to take pain-killers and wear a neck brace after the accident near his home Crackpot Cottage, near Huddersfield. 'I've always liked squirrels - but once you have one land on your head travelling about 48.27kph you can easily go off them,' Mr Madden, a welder, said. His head-borne bird feeder was destroyed, and he vowed he would not build another.

From the unidentified clippings file.

United States

Summary of a letter from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, State of Michigan...

Mr. Ryan DeVries

2088 Dagget Pierson,

MI 49339

SUBJECT: DEQ File No. 97-59-0023; T11N; R10W, Sec.20; Montcalm County

Dear Mr. DeVries:

It has come to the attention of the Department of Environmental Quality that there has been recent unauthorized activity on the above referenced parcel of property. You have been certified as the legal landowner and/or contractor who did the following: Construction and maintenance of two wood debris dams across the outlet stream of Spring Pond. A review of the Department's files shows that no permits have been issued. The Department has determined that this activity is in violation of Part 301, Inland Lakes and Streams, of the Natural Resource and Environmental Protection Act, Act 451 of the Public Acts of 1994, being sections 324.30101 to 324.30113 of the Michigan Compiled Laws, annotated.

The Department has been informed that one or both of the dams partially failed during a recent rain event, causing debris and flooding at downstream locations. Dams of this nature are inherently hazardous and cannot be permitted. The Department therefore orders you to cease and desist all activities of this nature and restore the stream to a free-flow condition by 31 January 2002.

Please notify this office when the restoration has been completed so that a follow-up site inspection may be scheduled by our staff. Failure to comply with this request or any further unauthorized activity on the site may result in this case being referred for elevated enforcement action. We anticipate your full cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

David L. Price

District Representative Land and Water Management Division

This was the response:

Dear Mr. Price,

Re: DEQ File No. 97-59-0023; T11N; R10W, Sec. 20; Montcalm County.

Your certified letter dated 12/17/01 has been handed to me to respond to. First of all, I am the legal owner and a couple of beavers are in the (State unauthorized) process of constructing and maintaining two wood 'debris' dams across the outlet stream of my Spring Pond.

While I did not pay for, authorize, nor supervise their dam project, I think they would be highly offended that you call their skillful use of nature's building materials 'debris.' I would like to challenge your department to attempt to emulate their dam project any time and/or any place you choose. I believe I can safely state there is no way you could ever match their dam skills, their dam resourcefulness, their dam ingenuity, their dam persistence, their dam determination and/or their dam work ethic.

As to your request, I do not think the beavers are aware that they must first fill out a dam permit prior to the start of this type of dam activity. My first dam question to you is: (1) Are you trying to discriminate against my Spring Pond Beavers or (2) do you

require all beavers throughout this State to conform to said dam request? If you are not discriminating against these particular beavers, through the Freedom of Information Act, I request completed copies of all those other applicable beaver dam permits that have been issued. Perhaps we will see if there really is a dam violation of Part 301, Inland Lakes and Streams, of the Natural Resource and Environmental Protection Act, etc. I have several concerns. Aren't the beavers entitled to legal representation? The Spring Pond Beavers are unable to pay for said representation, so the State will have to provide them with a dam lawyer. The Department's dam concern that one or both of the dams failed during a recent rain event causing flooding is proof that this is a natural occurrence, which the Department is required to protect against. In other words, we should leave the Spring Pond Beavers alone rather than harassing them and calling them dam names. If you want the stream restored to a dam free-flow condition please contact the beavers - but if you are going to arrest them, they obviously did not pay any attention to your dam letter, being unable to read English.

In my humble opinion, the Spring Pond Beavers have a right to build their unauthorized dams as long as the sky is blue, the grass is green and water flows downstream. They have more dam rights than I do to live and enjoy Spring Pond. If the Department lives up to its name, it should protect the natural resources (beavers) and the environment (beavers' dams.).

So, as far as the beavers and I are concerned, this dam case can be referred for more elevated enforcement action right now. Why wait until 31 January? The Spring Pond Beavers may be under the dam ice then and there will be no way for you or your dam staff to contact or harass them then. In conclusion, I would like to bring to your attention to a real environmental quality (health) problem in the area. It is the bears! Bears are actually defecating in our woods. I definitely believe you should be persecuting the defecating bears and leave the beavers alone. If you are going to investigate the beaver dam, watch your step - the bears are not careful where they dump!

Being unable to comply with your dam request, and being unable to contact you on your dam answering machine, I am sending this response to your dam office.

Sincerely,

Stephen L. Tvedten



Australia

Tax Incentives for Conservation

Changes to Australian Federal tax laws in the last two years provide a potentially powerful mechanism for encouraging conservation initiatives on private land. Gifts of property (land, buildings, shares, vehicles and machinery etc) worth more than \$A5000 to registered environmental organisations are tax deductible, and landowners entering into perpetual conservation covenants will qualify for tax deductions on reduced land value.

From Wetland Link Bulletin, December 2002.



Ruapehu under cloud.

And at Home

Land Access Under Spotlight

A review group has been set up to look at the need to clarify the legal situation concerning public access on private land, says Minister of Rural Affairs Jim Sutton. The 11-member group, led by former Meat NZ chairman Sir John Acland, will also look at issues related to the foreshores of lakes, rivers and the sea.

The legal situation around the Queen's Chain is confused, public understanding incomplete and access over the land in question sometimes discouraged. 'People have the impression that the Queen's Chain applies to all beaches and rivers and that simply isn't true,' the Minister says. There is no access to beaches in parts of Banks Peninsula and the Marlborough Sounds, for example, and there is confusion over how the Queen's Chain applies to braided rivers. As well, there are other issues to do with access generally. There are now more examples of landholders restricting public access to previously accessible river, beach and mountain lands, or charging a fee for access. This is anathema to many New Zealanders and it is important that the issues are studied and solutions found before tensions make some situations intractable.

Sir John says that more restrictions by landowners may result in more poaching. He wants to keep and maintain the 150-year-old philosophy New Zealanders have adopted. Legally it is a landowner's right to exclude the public if there is no Queen's Chain, but he is worried about the traditional 'goodwill' being lost.

Public Access NZ spokesman Bruce Mason says a danger arising from the exercise is that a common standard of access might be sought, irrespective of land tenure. 'The public cannot expect the same sort of rights over private land that they currently enjoy over public lands. This is politically unattainable.'

Mr Sutton says that the Government is interested in clarifying pedestrian access in particular. 'Landholders must retain the right to exclude motor vehicles, guns and dogs,' he says. But Federated Farmers national board member John Aspinall says any decision to increase public access to rural New Zealand must proceed with caution.

[Your feedback is welcome. Post your comments to: The Chairman, Reference Group on Land Access, c/o MAF, PO Box 2526, Wellington.]

Adapted from reports in Country Wide, February and March 2003, and Wairarapa News, 19 February 2003.

Clippings

Big 3 Contest - 21-22 June 2003

The Hamilton Fish and Game Association invites teams to join the competition, which will be hunted and fished over the Auckland / Waikato Fish and Game region. The Game Bag for the Big 3 is a duck (excluding paradise), a pheasant and a trout. Prizes will be given for the heaviest game bag, heaviest duck, longest pheasant and heaviest trout. The cost is \$20 per team.

For more information contact Jack Worth, phone 07 846 3808.

Taxing Topics

The NZ Native Forests Restoration Trust's Rimutaka Reserve is situated just west of Featherston. It is now known as Pigeon Bush. 'At 1175ha it is by far our largest reserve. The land has been farmed since the 1860s and was eventually almost completely cleared. Gorse began to take over after World War Two, but native regeneration is now very dense. There was pressure to subdivide for lifestyle blocks so it is fortunate to have been able to secure such a large piece for permanent protection. The link the reserve makes between the Rimutaka and Tararua Conservation Parks expands the forest boundaries in an ecologically significant way, providing an assured corridor for wildlife.

'The lowland beech forest present on the reserve is the most rare of all the lowland forests in the Tararua Ecological Area, and the visual satisfaction of an unbroken forested line along SH2 and behind Featherston is realized as lifestyle development gradually encroaches into these areas of high scenic value.'

'The Trust's latest newsletter, Canopy, reports that while their other conservation reserves 'are generally accorded tax-free status by their various local authorities, the situation in the South Wairarapa zone of Wellington region stands out as a regrettable anomaly. We have made a series of approaches to these councils and are continuing to work on the problem, which in the opinion of Trustees represents a serious and inequitable drain on our resources.'

From www.nznftrt.org.nz and Canopy No 36, Summer 2002.

Wonderful Lake Ellesmere

Te Waihora, or Lake Ellesmere, our fourth largest lake remains one of New Zealand's great natural treasures despite considerable modification by man and devastating acts of God such as the Wahine storm in April 1968. Matched only by the North Island's Lake Wairarapa it is a superb environment for many species.

Once it teemed with eels and flounder, and is now considerably smaller in area than it was 100 years ago. But it is still very important to Ngai Tahu and also to the thousands of others who visit to fish, hunt, or simply to observe the amazing diversity of birdlife which thrives in the food-rich shallow, brackish water. Some 161 bird species have been recorded.

The lake was gifted to Maori as part of the Ngai Tahu settlement in 1998, and now they work in conjunction with the Department of Conservation and Fish and Game on a joint management plan which looks certain to enhance the natural values of the lake, as well as to cater to the needs of other users.

Fish and Game now administers the 800 or so mai mais on the lake. Unauthorised ones, or those in disrepair, are removed. Owners are charged a small levy which goes towards wetland management.

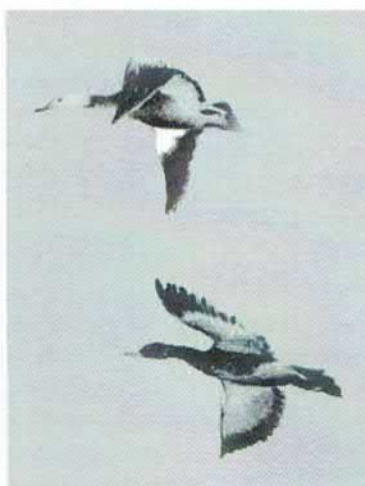
Source: www.fishandgame.org.nz and The Press, 2 February 2002.

And the gobbledegook prize goes to... 'This figure [\$1million] would allow more work to be undertaken to develop the draft discussion document to be submitted to Cabinet. Additional funding will be required to undertake the public consultation and the analysis of submissions received. Further funding would then be required to develop the operational management tools necessary to implement the strategic framework arising from the consultation process...'

OR, 'We need much more than a million bucks to get this job done, not to mention the extra funding required to provide the dictionaries required to meet our polysyllabic targets of maximum paper usage per policy document.'

Do you really, really want to know what it's about? It's 'The work programme to develop an oceans policy.' All guessers require a brisk round of voluntary self-congratulation.

Mainly from The Dominion, 25 June 2002.



Graphite drawing by Paul Martinson



'You're up, Red.' By Gary Larson, from A Far Side Collection: Last Chapter and Worse.

Food, Glorious Food

Quick Duck Snack

Rinse three duck breasts and dry them well with paper towels. In a small bowl combine 1/2 a cup of chicken stock, 2Tb soy sauce, 1tsp ground ginger, 3Tb orange juice and 2 1/2Tb chopped salted peanuts. Stir and set aside.

Melt 2Tb butter in a pan, add 1/3 cup celery, 1/2 cup onion and 2/3 cup carrot, all finely sliced. Reduce the heat and cook the vegetables gently until tender.

Add the soy mix to the pan, bring it to the boil then reduce it to a simmer. Nestle the meat into the sauce, cover and cook 10 minutes. Serve with rice.

From Ducks Unlimited's online newsletter, September 2002.

NOSLOC FEEDERS

The Nosloc feeding system has been developed in New Zealand by Dennis Colson of Te Kuiti. The feeders are suitable for duck feeding and free range feeding. Of most interest to DU members will be the duck and pheasant feeders. The newly designed nozzles feed both wheat and barley, or you can feed whole maize by using the special end cap provided. 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.

FENN TRAP MK 6

Deadly to ferrets, stoats, weasels and rats, these all-metal traps are easy to set and are the ultimate quick-kill tunnel trap.

\$35.00 each.

GREY TEAL NEST BOX

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

The Mitredale Duck Club Cookbook

By Di Pritt, published by Halcyon Press. \$19.95 including GST, postage and packing.

Reading...

● 'What's Happening in Stoa research?' The fourth report on the five-year stoa research programme (Department of Conservation, Box 10-420, Wellington.)

● NZ Conservation Management Group (CmaG) Annual Report 2002. (c/o Otorohanga Kiwi House, Box 222, Otorohanga.)

● Environment Waikato's Fact Sheet 4: Wetland Restoration Information and Contacts - has regional and national addresses. (Phone 0800 800 401)

Copies of longer material that we don't have space to print in Flight are available from the Editor:

● Brown Teal Conservation Trust - important points from the new Manual

● Research Paper: Comparison of Avian Communities on Restored and Natural Wetlands in North and South Dakota, by John T. Ratti and others. (See item in Flight 113 October 2002 page 13.)

● Background on Resource Management Act changes (Forest and Bird).

● World Water Facts - depressing but interesting information from the Planet Ark website, which provides Reuters material on a wide range of environmental issues (www.planetark.org).

● The 21st Century Blues, by Kenny Ausubel - a well-written, almost medicinal piece of dark environmental/political humour (is there a difference?) from the American independent journalism site AlterNet. (The writing here is consistently good, a treat whether you agree with it or not. -Ed.)

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Mute swan at Stoneyoaks. Photo: Gail Simons.

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