



DUCKS UNLIMITED (N. Z.) INCORPORATED
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FLIGHT 4/80 ISSUE 26

DECEMBER 1980

"FLIGHT"





The Cover

"North Island Canadas" at the
Chakune property of DU members
Bill Pritt and daughter Diane.

"FLIGHT"

NO 4/80	ISSUE 26	DECEMBER 1980

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NEW MEMBERS:

The following new members are welcomed this issue.

Brian Alexander	(J)	D.P. Hewitt	(S)	Rachael Payne	(J)
Mrs E. Ammann	(S)	R.W. Jackson	(F)	Bruce Polletti	(F)
John Britten	(F)	H. Jones	(S)	J.A. Roberts	(F)
Kim Buckett	(F)	J.F. Keenan	(S)	R.R. Rayner	(F)
Miss Raewyn Colling	(S)	Michael Koning	(S)	Standard 3 & 4	(J)
Nuno L d'Eca	(S)	Mrs B.A. Lovatt	(S)	Ngahinepouri School, Ohaupo	
Miss Cara French	(F)	John Merrilees	(S)	Ian Stuart	(J)
Alan Gibson	(F)	Stuart McLennan	(F)	G.B. Squires	(S)
Simon Goode	(J)	Mark Nicholson	(F)	Ms Katherine Wilde	(J)
Mathew Haliburton	(J)	Mrs Carol Nairn	(S)		

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PLEASE POST TO: (name)
(address)

Note: Ducks Unlimited Inc, U.S.A. generously donated a supply of DU International duck head pins for our annual conference auction. A limited stock remains for members interested in acquiring this handsome memento - depicting a polished mallard profile, offset by a clean black border - may be used as a lapel pin, hat pin or tie tack. They also make perfect gifts.

DU News

SUCCESSFUL BROWN TEAL LIBERATION AT MATAKANA ISLAND

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On Saturday, 6 December 1980, 32 Brown Teal were released on a lagoon at the northern end of Matakana Island, off the coast of Tauranga in the Bay of Plenty. A full report with photographs will appear in the March issue of FLIGHT.

In the meantime special thanks to N.Z. Forest Products Limited for allowing the release of Brown Teal on Matakana Island and for the use of their vessel to transport the party to the island on Saturday; also to Liz Lysaght and the crew of television's TOP HALF programme for filming the release. TOP HALF screened the programme on Monday evening, 8 December. Special thanks too to Director, Mr Sig Bronger and his wife, June, DU's membership secretary, and "Gug" for their comprehensive arrangements and generous hospitality to the DU team, the film crew and the N.Z.P.F. visitors. - some 30 persons in all. This release of Brown Teal by Ducks Unlimited is a most significant step in the "Pateke" programme.

DU ON DISPLAY

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On 5 and 6 October 1980, Ducks Unlimited participated in the Wanganui Outdoor Exhibition for a second time. Director Diane Pritt, with help from member Mark Timms, manned the display for the weekend. Interest was shown by a large cross-section of the public and many mentioned having seen the Operation Pateke programme on television's WILD TRACK recently. Such displays are an important part of DU's advertising plans as they expose large numbers of people to the organisation and its objectives. It is an excellent way of keeping the organisation's name before the public. DU has three complete sets of display photographs which are available to any member participating in such exhibitions..... remember A & P Shows, Conservation Week, and Fairs - all of which are excellent opportunities. Pictured below are Diane Pritt and Mark Timms at the Wanganui Outdoor Exhibition.



HOOT-N-ANNY '81

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The Hamilton chapter of Ducks Unlimited is presenting the country's first Bavarian Duck Pluckers Hoot-n-anny in the Waikato on Saturday 25 April 1981. The Hoot-n-anny will feature a duck plucking contest - duck calling contest - prizes for best home made decoy, best dressed duck shooter, oldest duckhunter present, plus door prizes, a continuous buffet supper and a Bavarian band - the evening will conclude with a monster unreserved auction. Further details will follow in the March issue of FLIGHT.

GUEST EDITORIAL
COMMENT:

NOTES ON THE CURRENT STATUS OF NEW ZEALAND'S WATERFOWL

The following brief notes prepared by Neil Hayes should be of interest to many members and will, hopefully, encourage some comment. Please write to the Flight Editor at DU Headquarters, P.O. Box 74 Hamilton if you have comments or additional information which may be useful.

Neil Hayes is well known to DU members for his passion for waterfowl rearing, evidenced by the "little wetland" at his home in suburban Wellington where over the years he has reared some 400 waterfowl - Brown Teal, Grey Teal, Scaup, Shoveler and Grey Duck. During the week Neil tutors in mechanical engineering.

GREY DUCK (a native species, also in Australia)

Land development and the drainage of wild waterfowl habitat has seriously depleted New Zealand's Grey Duck population. Unlike the mallard, the grey duck has generally been unable to adapt to artificial and developed habitat. However there are still sufficient wild places left to maintain grey duck populations for many years and the species is in no danger, with a population of possibly around one million. There are large numbers of grey duck in captivity and captive production is high. Hybridisation with mallards is not a serious problem and occurs rarely. The grey duck is still an important part of the waterfowl hunters bag.

NEW ZEALAND SCAUP (an endemic species)

This is one species which has benefited from the erection of hydro-electric dams. Its numbers were probably as low as 2,000 at one period, after once being widespread throughout New Zealand, but the current population could now be as high as 5,000 and rising. The scaup adapts well to captivity and breeds readily in relatively small aviaries. Most DU members with waterfowl collections are now producing good numbers of scaup each season. The species is totally protected.

NEW ZEALAND BROWN TEAL (an endemic species)

Once widespread throughout New Zealand and a heavily shot species in the early 1900s, the Brown Teal also failed to adapt to the drastic drainage and land development which has taken place during the last 90 years. The species now numbers only about 1,000 of which about 600 reside on Great Barrier Island and about 400 in North Auckland. Numbers in the wild are still declining but over the next few years, Ducks Unlimited hopes to reverse this trend by releasing large numbers of captive reared birds into the wild. The Brown Teal adapts extremely well to captivity and around 100 birds are now held in captivity in New Zealand. The species is totally protected.

GREY TEAL (self introduced)

The Grey Teal introduced itself into New Zealand about the middle of last century but its numbers have never increased to any large degree. However, since the advent of DU's Operation "Gretel" project, the numbers of grey teal seem to be on the move. Recent reports indicate a total population of around 30,000. Grey teal adapt readily to captivity but surprisingly do not breed well in captivity. It is very much a flock bird and the secret of captive breeding may be in having a large captive flock. The grey teal is totally protected.

BLUE DUCK (an endemic species)

The Blue Duck is another species whose numbers have been drastically reduced by land modification and habitat destruction. Currently numbering about 5,000 in the wild, the blue duck will be seriously endangered by the 60 or so new hydro electric power dams that are to be erected in the next 15 years. This species probably gives DU more concern than any other as the captive rearing programme is very much in its infancy, and it will be many years before it gets into full swing, during which time the further 60 small hydro dam schemes will be started. The future for the blue duck does not look good - the species is totally protected.

continued on page 5.....

NOTES ON THE CURRENT STATUS OF NEW ZEALAND'S WATERFOWL continued from page 3

CANADA GEESE (introduced)

This species, which is North America's most respected, is unfortunately New Zealand's most maligned and abused species of wildlife. DU fails to appreciate the reasons why this species has been annually massacred in the thousands; not by shooting in a sporting manner but by slaughtering goslings, the destruction of eggs, and slaughter of adults in the moult etc etc. Nowhere in the world has any game bird been subjected to this abuse. As a consequence, Canada goose numbers are now at an all time low of about 12,000. On a happier note, DU's Operation "Branta" has been progressing extremely well and there are now around 600 geese resident in the North Island where they are currently protected. Canadas are slow breeders in captivity and 8-12 birds are needed to encourage the bird to breed.

BLACK SWAN (introduced)

Originally introduced for ornamental purposes the Black Swan rapidly filled an important ecological niche and soon became an important game species. Unfortunately the "Wahine Storm" in 1968 reduced the large Lake Ellesmere population by about 50,000 birds and the New Zealand population has taken a long time to recover from this blow. However national numbers are steadily increasing and the total population at present is around 50,000. Again, the Black Swan is very much a flock bird and several pairs are needed to encourage captive breeding.

PARADISE SHELDUCK (endemic)

The Paradise Shelduck is the species which has benefited most from land development and it is gradually becoming widespread throughout New Zealand. Total numbers are approximately around 150,000. It is, however, a species which requires very careful management as most females do not breed until 3 years of age, and its numbers can be rapidly reduced through excessive shooting. It is a game species in many districts. The Paradise adapts well to a large scale captive environment and good pairs breed readily.

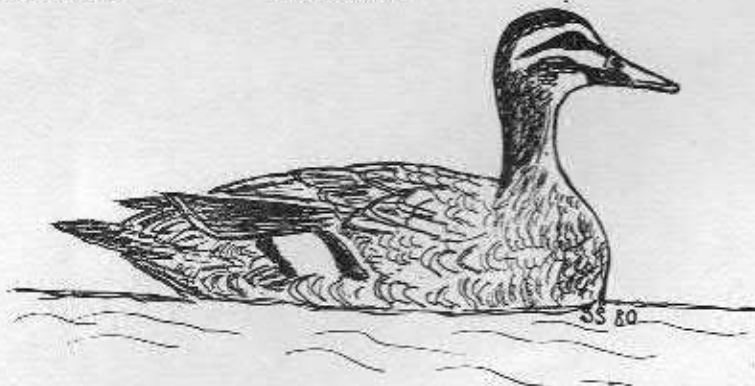
THE MALLARD (introduced)

There is little doubt that New Zealand's waterfowl scene would be relatively dismal without the mallard, which has now adapted to all forms of open waterway. In 50 years the mallard has spread to just about every corner of the country and its numbers have increased to around 5 million. Naturally, it is now the major game species. Unfortunately its numbers have presented many farmers with a crop protection problem and in some areas numbers are reported to be in "plague" proportions. However, with careful management, DU sees not reason why the mallard should ever become a "problem" bird.

NEW ZEALAND SHOVELER (endemic)

The Shoveler is widespread throughout the country and is on the game bird list in most districts. Although less is known about the New Zealand Shoveler than any other species in the country, it does seem to have maintained a reasonably stable population of around 150,000 over many years. It is of course a very fast flier and a very difficult target for the hunter and this aspect has undoubtedly helped to maintain overall numbers. It adapts well to captivity but is without doubt the poorest breeder in a captive situation. Again, it is very much a flock bird and the only breeders who have had any degree of success have been those with large open ponds and large numbers of shoveler.

TO SUMMARISE.... we can say that apart from the situation with Canada Geese and Blue Duck, the overall New Zealand waterfowl situation is, in spite of unbelievable drainage of wetlands over recent years, still in a reasonably healthy state.
(F.N. Hayes)



TAX CONCESSIONS ON D.U. CONTRIBUTIONS / DONATIONS

From time to time DU receives inquiries from members as to the tax concessions they receive when they make a contribution/donation to Ducks Unlimited. Below is a recent letter from the Inland Revenue Department stating the tax deductibility rating of donations and contributions made to our organisation for the information of members and friends.



5 October 1979

Donations and subscriptions to Ducks Unlimited qualify for the purposes of sections 56A and 147 of the Income Tax Act 1976 (previously sections 84B and 126B of the Land and Income Tax Act 1954). Under section 56A individuals may claim a rebate of 50 cents in the dollar in respect of donations and subscriptions to Ducks Unlimited up to a maximum of \$175 for all qualifying donations and private school fees. Under section 147 public companies may claim a deduction up to a maximum of \$1,000 to Ducks Unlimited. In respect of the aggregate of all qualifying donations a public company can claim the greater of:-

- \$1,000, or
 - 5 percent of the company's assessable income.
- Ducks Unlimited is also approved for the purposes of the following Acts:-
- Section 18 of the Stamp and Cheque Duties Act 1971 - exemption from conveyance duty.
 - Sections 39A and 73 of the Estate and Gift Duties Act 1968 - exemption for estate and gift duty purposes.
 - Section 61(25) of the Income Tax Act 1976 (previously 86(1) (n) of the Land and Income Tax Act 1954) - exemption from income tax.

Yours faithfully,

S. H. Snary
Director (Revenue)

OPERATION PATEKE

=====

BREEDING SEASON PROGRESS

The 1980/81 breeding season is now in full swing and good numbers of Brown Teal are being reared by members. Up to the middle of November, 33 birds had been reared and some eggs were still being incubated. One of John Gill's females (John is the Project Co-ordinator) is likely to take top marks this season - for while in the process of rearing six birds she proceeded to lay a further 11 eggs! Ducks Unlimited is very confident that last year's record figure of 45 birds reared will easily be exceeded! Further good news from Wildfowl Trust, Slimbridge is that both DU female Brown Teal have laid again - 2 clutches incubating!

"WILD TRACK" TELEVISION PROGRAMME

The "Wild Track" programme featuring a rundown on Brown Teal was aired on 12 September 1980. The programme showed some superb views of wild birds on Great Barrier Island, gave a detailed account of their current status in the wild, and then went on to show what Ducks Unlimited is attempting to achieve. DU congratulates Michael Stedman of the Broadcasting Corporation of New Zealand, Wildlife Film Unit and his team for top quality film work and presentation.

Featured below are "stills" from the programme featuring DU's Neil Hayes (right) being interviewed by "Wild Track's" Dave Wakelin on the aims and objectives of Operation "Pateke" - the other photograph features one of the "stars" of the show!



When Canadas Drop In Like Maple Leaves

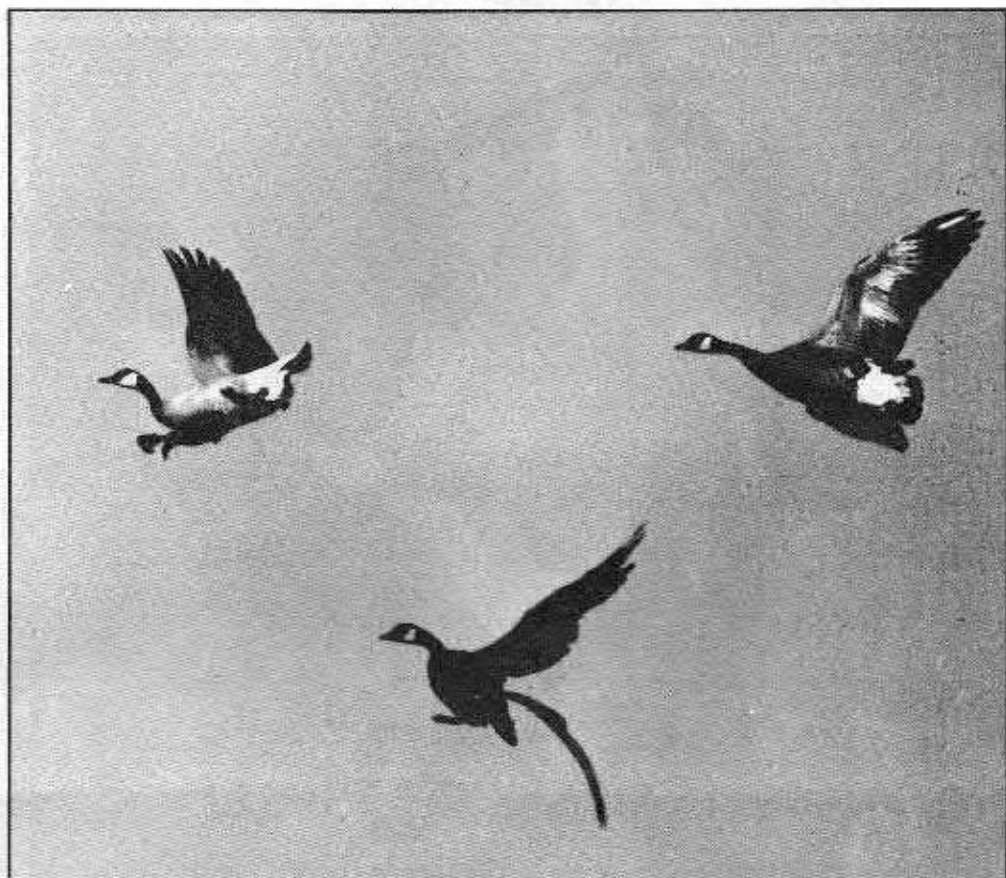


Story and photos

Some call it "whiffing," some "side-slipping," others "maple-leaving," but a goose may just call it fun when he flips upside down in midair and then flips back up.

This strange behavior common to most species of geese is also exhibited at times by ducks, but never quite with the zest geese display. The term "whiffing" was coined by early sportsmen, who carefully observed and described the activity they saw and heard overhead. H. F. Witherby and his colleagues described it in the *Handbook of British Birds* in 1939: "... geese sometimes perform striking evolutions, birds plunging through air in a kind of spiral nosedive with wings half folded, or tilting over and side-slipping in a remarkable manner (termed whiffing by sportsmen.)" In 1898 Neltze Blanchan noted that white-fronted geese in flocks could often be seen "diving, tumbling, turning somersaults downward and catching themselves before they strike the water." From a distance whiffing geese look like big maple leaves tumbling earthward.

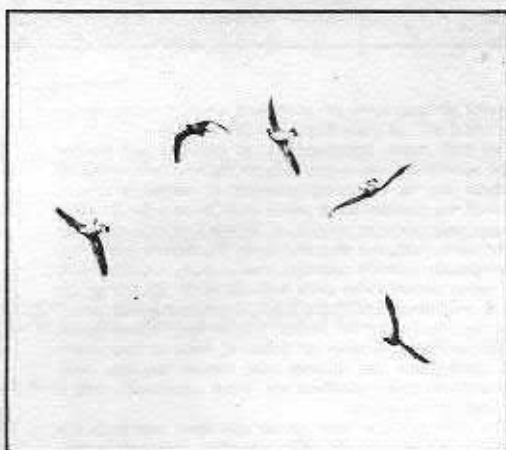


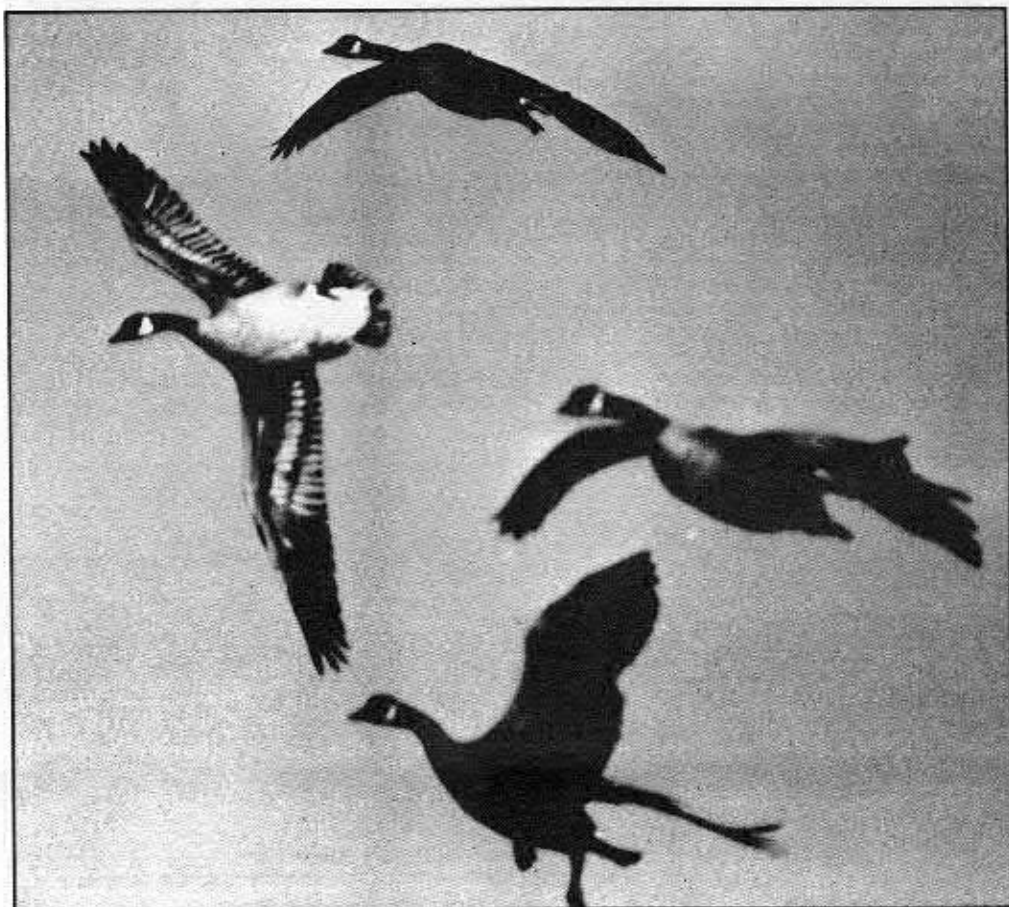


by Glenn Chambers

Geese maple-leaf most often when approaching a landing site. A goose (or several geese) within a high-flying flock suddenly flips onto its back, then quickly rights itself, usually repeating the maneuver shortly thereafter. For a split second the goose actually flies upside down, feet pointed skyward, but head always properly oriented.

Waterfowl behaviorists have long wondered why geese whiffle. The most common explanation is that geese do it to lose altitude quickly while landing. Geese often side-slip a number of times in a descent, dropping almost straight down for several feet. Behaviorist Paul Johnsgard believes that geese use whiffing to settle into tightly confined quarters. I believe this is true during hunting season when large flocks of geese return to resting and loafing areas where peripheral hunting is permitted. Many feel that whiffing geese are simply frolicking and enjoying life. Des and Jen Bartlett's article about snow geese (National Geographic, December, 1973)





showed photographs of immature captive snow geese "showing off" as they flew over the authors.

I've had many opportunities to observe and photograph whiffing Canada geese from the western shores of Hudson Bay to wintering grounds in central Missouri. Most of my photos were taken near Swan Lake Wildlife Refuge near Sumner, Missouri. While a casual observer might easily suppose that the birds flip 360 degrees, my photographs (which number more than 1,000) show that geese actually flip only halfway over. They may do this at any elevation. In the flocks I photographed, whiffing usually began at about 1,500 feet. Some geese would whiffle a number of times at three or four intervals during the last quarter-mile before landing; very playful birds even whiffled on "final approach" just a few feet off the water.

The photos show that geese use their feet both for balance and as rudders while whiffing. Just before flipping, the goose usually has relaxed legs, then its feet drop and the roll begins. As the bird turns upside down, it pulls its feet forward and upward, then tucks them back in on the return roll. Both adult and immature geese whiffle, though my photos show that immature

Canadas appear to do more of it.

Canada geese, I've found, usually only whiffle when they're comfortable with the surroundings they're descending into. Geese in flocks returning to rest areas after a morning of feeding in surrounding cornfields almost always side-slip as they approach a lake landing. This is especially true before hunting season opens. Whiffing is most common and persists longer in flocks filtering into an area already largely populated by geese. The late arrivals have little reason to fear the area below—how could 10,000 other geese be wrong? It appears, then, that geese indeed use whiffing for fun, as well as a way to descend quickly.

On quiet days when geese are whiffing, the muffled sound of distorted pinions against air can be heard up to a quarter-mile away. You can also hear a swoosh from birds whiffing near the ground. Such subtle things as the intriguing noises and aerial display of geese flying upside down are among the most interesting in nature. Look for maple-leafing next time you're outdoors with the geese. Or maybe even go one better, and try to set your next spread of decoys in such a way that they attract upside-down geese! Reprinted courtesy DU Inc

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OPERATION GRETTEL

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REPORT FROM BARTON'S LAGOON

By far the best season at Barton's, with just over 200 eggs being recorded, from 20 of the 30 boxes, in early November. Fantastic production from a relatively small area.

DUNEDIN

Mr Horry Sinclair reports much activity by Grey Teal in and around the nest boxes, but no eggs. This is very disappointing considering the numbers of Grey Teal in the region. However, the good news from Dunedin is that the Waiholo/Waipora area is in the throes of being established as a Wildlife Management Reserve.

KOWARAU DAM, MASTERTON

Again, a very disappointing season with no boxes being used. Richard Pinkerton has been kindly carrying out the inspection work here. Some good news from Kowarau is that at least one pair of Canada Geese are breeding.

MATHEW'S LAGOON

After the initial inspection in September, hopes were high for early box usage by Grey Teal, but after two further inspections, no eggs have been laid in any of the boxes. Again, very puzzling and disappointing but DU is confident that this area will eventually be one of the most productive.

POKENO, SOUTH AUCKLAND

Ian McFadden, the Wildlife Officer on site at Pokeno, has prepared a comprehensive document of his studies at Mr Tony Flexman's property to date which is an outstanding record of the situation there. However he, too, reports that the breeding season this year has been both shorter and somewhat disappointing in comparison with previous years. Ian is sure it is because the shooting season went well into June this year so that part of the breeding season was lost. To make matters worse, Ian comments, by the end of October the Whangamarino swamp was dry and in late September the stop bank beyond the pond on which the boxes are located blew out causing a drop of 750mm there. Ian is certain this pond had previously enabled breeding to continue up to now in the past, even with the Whangamarino dry. He comments on how important it is to have good areas of floodwater over the period June to October. Ian advises that eggs laid to date are 1,185; still to hatch are 50 (or 6 clutches). 621 have hatched from 801 incubated. Average clutch is 11.13. This means 334 never incubated or were deserted.

Ian McFadden is making a further inspection in December - he intends to start trapping earlier next year as he noticed that even halfway through the shooting season, 75 plus birds were on the sanctuary pond and it would be wise to catch and band them before breeding begins.

WAIKATO

Dudley Bell reports that an inspection at the Mountley site on 27 September showed outstanding results for the 1980 season.

25 boxes, total on the area
18 boxes used

156 eggs - of which 130 were in various stages of incubation
- 2 boxes had 2 infertile eggs in each with an undetermined amount hatched
- 4 boxes with 22 eggs, still being laid

"The area was alive with Grey Teal hopping in and out of the boxes and flying over the lagoon - a great sight", comments Dudley.

On 20 September a team of 6 DU members spent a half day at Lake Are Are in the Waikato erecting 31 DU "Gretel" boxes of the new ply type. This lake is one of those where the Department of Lands & Survey has given DU permission to erect boxes - DU thanks the owner, Mr Pallerson for his kindness in making access to the area available for Paul Casey's landcruiser and trailer loaded high with gear for the operation. The boxes were assembled on site by 4 persons while the other 2 members commenced ramming the poles. A very successful outing and thanks to those who participated - Lou Bell, Allan Bell, Paul Casey, Neil Fisher and Peter Jackson.

1981 ANNUAL CONFERENCE: DU HAS SET THE DATE FOR ITS 1981 CONFERENCE -
 ===== SATURDAY 18 JULY - FURTHER DETAILS IN MARCH 'FLIGHT'

SALE OF DUCKS UNLIMITED NEST BOXES

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DU Grey Teal nest boxes are now available for sale in kitset form for \$ 8 per box delivered, or \$ 10 per box built up and including delivery costs. Please complete the form below if you wish to order supplies.

To: Ducks Unlimited (NZ) Inc - DU GREY TEAL NEST BOX ORDER FORM	
P.O. Box 74 Hamilton	
PLEASE SUPPLY ME WITH	DU nest boxes in <u>KITSET</u> form
	@ \$8 each delivered
.	DU nest boxes in <u>BUILT UP</u> form
	@ \$ 10 each delivered
CHEQUE ENCLOSED FOR \$	
PLEASE POST TO (name)	
(address)	
.	

Ducks Unlimited nest boxes are also available to DU members who have access to an area where Grey Teal are located - in sets of 10 boxes. Boxes are supplied in kitset form and DU will arrange purchase of poles as close as possible to the area concerned. Please contact DU Headquarters if you are interested in participating in the erection of boxes in your area.

RECOMMENDED READING

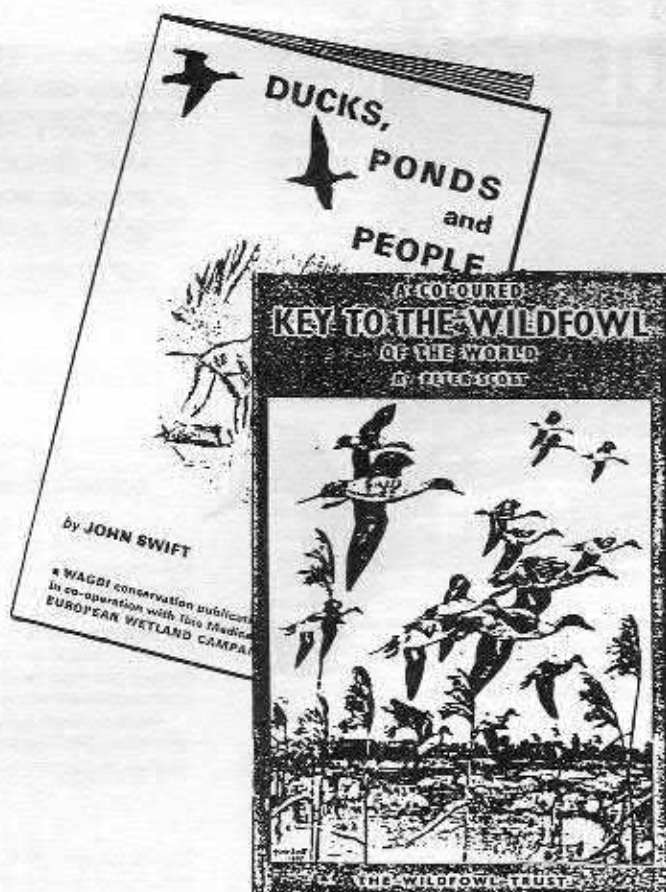
FOR 'DUCK PEOPLE'

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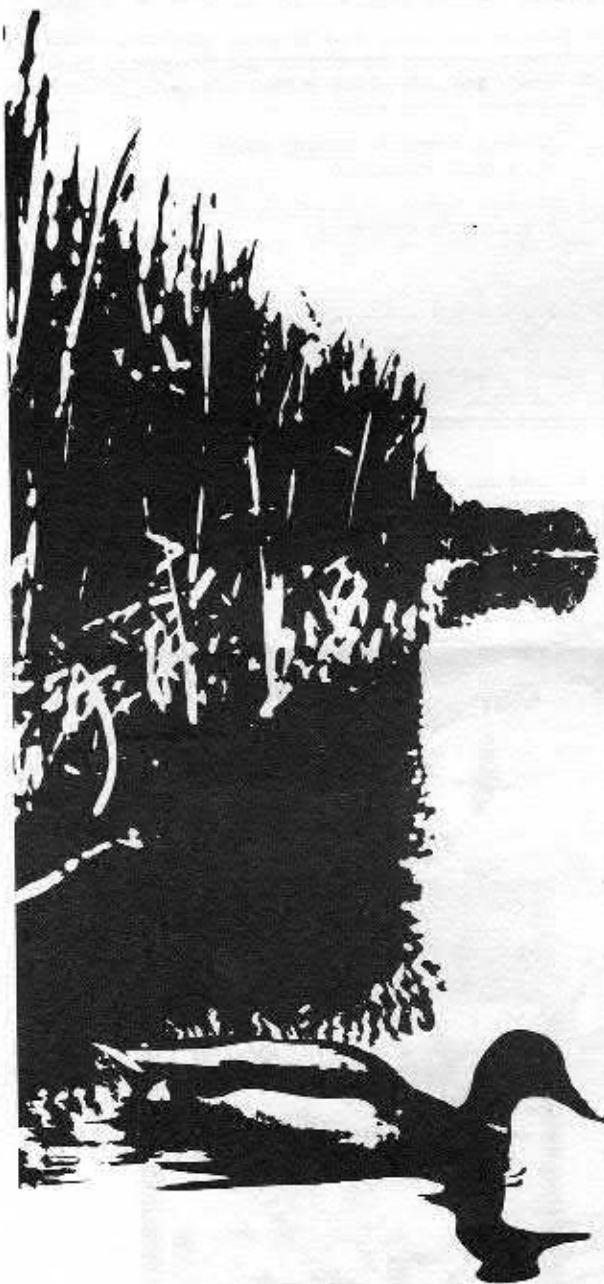
Further supplies of these booklets are now available.

"Ducks Ponds and People" is \$ 4 per copy (includes postage)

Sir Peter Scott's "The Wildfowl of the World", a Wildfowl Trust publication is also available at \$ 10 per copy.



YOUR DU MEMBERSHIP . . . THE *OTHER* RENEWABLE RESOURCE



WATERFOWL ARE A RENEWABLE RESOURCE GIVEN GOOD HABITAT PROTECTION DURING REPRODUCTIVE TIMES ETC ETC - FOOD, WATER AND SPECIAL COVER ARE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS IN THIS "GOOD HABITAT" BUT, FIRST, SOMEONE MUST ENSURE THERE WILL BE HABITAT TO BEGIN WITH. THAT'S WHAT YOUR SUPPORT OF DUCKS UNLIMITED IS ALL ABOUT.

AT DU WE CONSIDER YOUR MEMBERSHIP A RENEWABLE RESOURCE TOO. WHEN YOU RENEW YOU GUARANTEE THE COMPLETION OF WATERFOWL NESTBOX PROJECTS ALREADY UNDER WAY FROM THE PREVIOUS YEAR AND PROVIDE FOR NEW PROJECTS AS WELL AS BECOMING INVOLVED IN THE "RACE" TO SAVE OUR ENDANGERED WATERFOWL SPECIES. SO, JUST AS FOOD, WATER AND COVER ARE WHAT GOVERNS HABITAT QUALITY..... REGULAR MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS ARE WHAT GOVERN HABITAT DEVELOPMENT AND AN IMPROVEMENT IN WATERFOWL NUMBERS.

ALL CONTRIBUTIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE.

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1980/81 ARE NOW DUE.
HAVE YOU RENEWED?



We reprint below the Wellington Acclimatisation Society's management plan for Canada Geese in the Wairarapa District. This plan has now been approved by the Wairarapa Branch of Federated Farmers. The Wellington Society, and in particular its Senior Field Officer and DU member, Ian Buchanan, is to be congratulated on this fine plan for the future of Canadas.

OPERATION BRANTA

Policy for Management of Canada Geese Populations in the Wairarapa Region, Wellington Acclimatisation District

1. POLICY OBJECTIVES

- 1.1 To progressively establish Canada Geese throughout the region as viable breeding units.
- 1.2 To encourage and control the development of geese numbers to a level where an annual harvest is possible.
- 1.3 Once objective 1.2 has been reached, to encourage the utilisation of the Canada goose as a game bird species by hunters.
- 1.4 To establish and maintain lines of communication between the various interested parties (W.A.S., Federated Farmers, hunters, Wildlife Service).
- 1.5 To use appropriate control methods to prevent any likelihood of damage occurring by grazing of agricultural pastures and crops.

2. ESTABLISHMENT

- 2.1 Transfer from South Island
 - (a) Each year, for the first five years from January 1980, Wellington Acclimatisation Society, in conjunction with Ducks Unlimited (NZ) Inc. transfer 15 pairs (30 birds) as pre-fledgling juveniles from suitable Canada goose areas in the South Island.
 - (b) All geese so transferred to be pinioned in accordance with established procedures to render them permanently flightless.
- 2.2 Placement
 - (a) Geese transferred from the South Island are to be placed with co-operating farmers on suitable habitat areas, within previously defined nucleus establishment areas.
 - (b) The nucleus areas referred to in (a) above be the following:
 - (i) Kiriwakapapa / Miki Miki
 - (ii) Bideford / Te Ore Ore
 - (iii) Te Wharau / Gladstone
 - (iv) Homewood / Riversdale

2.3 Progeny

All progeny of geese in the nucleus units be left free flying and a close watch be kept on their movements within and outside the establishment areas.

3. DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 As the breeding flocks become established, with an annual production of young occurring, flappers and moulting adults be trapped, pinioned and relocated on to other suitable habitat areas within the region. This will only be necessary if natural expansion and distribution of breeding birds does not occur.
- 3.2 Annual production and distribution from the nucleus units to be closely monitored by the Wellington Society, in co-operation with the landowners involved.
- 3.3 After the end of the transfer period (1982) establishment units be monitored closely to record development of the total population.

4. CONTROL

- 4.1 During the establishment and development period all control of individual flock numbers on specified areas is to be done by the trapping and relocation of geese to other suitable areas. The relocated birds are to be pinioned to prevent return and will then act as further

establishment and development units in other suitable areas.

- 4.2 As the Canada goose becomes established in the Wairarapa, assessments will be made of each establishment area in conjunction with the landowners involved. The optimum and acceptable carrying capacity of these areas will be defined and flock numbers managed accordingly by W.A.S.
- 4.3 The management of flock numbers will involve the placing of a specified number of geese for a specified time on to the game licence for the region (Wairarapa). The ready accessibility of much of the Wairarapa hill country where Canada geese are to be established will facilitate the effective control of flock numbers by game bird hunters.
- 4.4 In individual areas where game bird hunting may not have been successful in controlling numbers, production can be simply and effectively controlled by the use of egg pricking. The necessity for this type of control measure will be established by the Wellington Acclimatisation Society in consultation with affected landowners, and will be carried out by the Society if it is established as necessary.
- 4.5 Where possible grazing problems are likely to occur, or are occurring outside the specified game season, the Society will act on complaints where deemed necessary by (a) the use of suitable scoring techniques to disperse flocks, (b) the issue of permits to individual farmers for goose control on their properties, subject to conditions laid down by the Society at the time. This has been an effective solution to much of the crop damage problems by Mallard ducks throughout the Wairarapa.
- 4.6 It is not envisaged, due to the types of habitats available to Canada geese in the Wairarapa, that any of the above techniques, other than game bird hunting will be necessary. They are included to show that, should the need arise, effective measures are available for the control of Canada goose numbers below a level at which grazing problems may occur. The Wairarapa does not offer the extensive high country breeding and feeding areas found in the South Island. It is only on these areas that birds will congregate in large numbers to breed and raise young, and to feed around large high country lakes, rivers and tarns.

The Wairarapa populations are expected to be much more widely spread, rather than concentrated in one area, and that all their life cycle requirements for breeding, feeding, moulting etc. will be met within their own home ranges. This situation will be closely monitored by W.A.S. and policy alterations made if other than the above situation is seen to be occurring.

5. LIAISON

- 5.1 Close liaison will be kept between Society staff and members involved in the project and individual landowners. This will involve co-operating farmers during the establishment period, and extend to all other farmers where Canada geese become established as the programme expands.
- 5.2 An annual report on the programme will be supplied to

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the Wairarapa District Federated Farmers organisation by W.A.S.

- 5.3 An ad hoc committee with representatives of W.A.S. and Wairarapa Federated Farmers to be set up, meeting as required, to monitor and control the development of Canada geese populations in the Wairarapa region.

CLOSING STATEMENT

The Wellington Acclimatisation Society views the establishment of Canada geese in the Wairarapa, and throughout the rest of the Wellington district, as a long term development project. There is no guarantee that the geese will

establish in any numbers, due to the lack of extensive suitable habitat throughout the region. However, it is hoped that over the next 10 years it will be possible to build numbers up to a level where limited hunting of this very desirable game bird is possible. The Society accepts complete responsibility for the development of the programme, and any control measures required in the future to prevent agricultural damage.

Ian Buchanan,
Senior Field Officer.



**THEIR
TOMORROW
DEPENDS
ON YOU
TODAY!**

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