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WINCHESTER

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Distributed in New Zealand By: Winchester New Zealand

No. 4/88 • ISSUE 58 • DECEMBER 1988

NEW ZEALAND REGISTERED MAGAZINE

DUCKS UNLIMITED
QUARTERLY
WATERFOWL JOURNAL

Flight



DUCKS UNLIMITED (N.Z.) INC., — FOR WATERFOWL AND WETLANDS — PO BOX 44-176 LOWER HUTT, NEW ZEALAND

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Cover photo: Jim Campbell's new family. Photo: Glenys Hansen

Ducks Unlimited (NZ) Incorporated is a private, charitable, non-profit conservation organisation dedicated to the preservation, restoration, creation and maintenance of wetland habitat in New Zealand, the propagation and conservation of the country's rare waterfowl, and the advocacy of wetlands as a valuable natural resource. This is achieved through six projects each with specific aims. These are: "Operation Pateke", the reduction of the threatened status of the New Zealand brown teal through the release of captive bred birds and wise habitat management; "Operation Grete", to increase the number of grey teal in New Zealand through the provision of suitable nesting habitat; "Operation Whio", the conservation of blue duck through the release of captive bred birds to expand the species range; "Operation Branta", to establish the Canada goose in the North Island as a valuable recreational resource; "Operation Royal Swan", the conservation of Mute Swan through the establishment of a captive breeding population; and "Operation Wetlands", to preserve, create and manage wetland areas through direct funding, technical assistance and public education of wetland values. The scientific study of wetlands and waterfowl is also encouraged through direct funding.

The organisation was founded in May 1974 by a group of concerned conservationists and incorporated by them in June 1975 at Wellington, New Zealand. Membership, in four categories, is open to anyone who supports the organisation's objectives. Junior membership is \$11.00 per annum, Full membership is \$27.50 per annum, Trade and Sponsor membership is \$55.00 per annum, and Life membership is \$550.00. Membership carries with it a subscription to "Flight", the official quarterly publication of Ducks Unlimited which currently reaches 2000 members and friends concerned with waterfowl conservation. Letters, manuscripts and photographs should be addressed to the "Flight" Editor. To assure prompt delivery, members should send subscription renewals and changes of address to National Headquarters at PO Box 44-176, Lower Hutt. Any views expressed by contributors in "Flight" are their own and do not necessarily constitute those of Ducks Unlimited (NZ) Incorporated.

President's Report

Jim Campbell, President

The past three months have seen our organisation very busy with two Chapters holding fund raising dinners and adding a large amount to the financial future of Ducks Unlimited NZ.

The inaugural meeting of the Sinclair Wetlands Management Committee, ably chaired by Roger Sutton, and the formation of the Otago Chapter to be led by Lyall Nash, was good news. They are fortunate to have the base of the Sinclair Wetlands Education Centre, and a lot of work ready to be completed in the form of display ponds etc in the Wetlands.

Whakatane Chapter are ready to engage themselves in several Habitat projects.

The visit of the American Ducks Unlimited executives ensured a very busy week for Dr Grant Dumbell, and Alan and Di Wilks, drivers of two mini buses from Auckland to Wellington and official tour guides. I sincerely thank all those people for hosting our Ducks Unlimited parties en route; your contribution is, I'm sure, a large step forward for Ducks Unlimited NZ, and a further inspiration to all members.

Our visitors inspired enthusiasm with every member they spoke with en route and were very impressed with our achievements over the past 14 years.

Dr Grant Dumbell has been taking an in depth survey of our management structure the past month which should enable directors to plot a steady course in the future.

His work on the recent membership survey still needs returns to come in to enable the survey to give guidelines as to where our membership is based.

Grant spent an interesting day recently with two mute swans required for launching a new perfume for Vanderbilt Perfumes. The result was an \$800.00 donation for Ducks Unlimited.



Proud breeder Melvin Pythe of Carterton Watches over his pair of blue ducks which will see 'Operation Whio' off to a good start.

The purchase of the Pearce Wetlands on the eastern edge of Lake Wairarapa means our need for more funding becomes important. Glenys Hansen and Andy Tannock, along with their respective enthusiastic teams of volunteers, demonstrated the fund raising potential of dinners to the extent of some \$11,000.00. We need more members,

Chapter dinners and plenty of habitat dollars at this time. Please encourage a friend to join Ducks Unlimited over the festive season — the reward for New Zealand's waterfowl will be tremendous.

I wish all members a happy festive season and prosperous New Year.

New appointment by Ducks Unlimited

The Directors of Ducks Unlimited are pleased to announce the appointment of Dr Grant Dumbell as Executive Director as of 1 September 1988 Grant will be on a contract basis. Ducks Unlimited has been funding Grant's PhD research on the brown teal which culminated in his graduation in May of this year. He shifted to Wellington in 1979 from New Plymouth and studied under Professor Jack Garrick at Victoria University for four years, graduating with a BSc and BSc (hons) degree with first class honours in zoology. In 1983 Grant travelled overseas for 14 months to Europe and the UK during which time he visited the Wildfowl Trust at Slimbridge. On return to New Zealand he became interested in brown teal through the influence of Dr Murray Williams of the Department of Conservation and was successful in gaining a NZ Wildlife Service postgraduate scholarship which, together with funding from Ducks Unlimited, resulted in Grant taking his Doctorate as outlined above. A long involvement with scouting ended with the completion of the Queen

Scouts Award, and as well Grant is a member of OSNZ and RF&BPS.

Grant has represented Ducks Unlimited at international conferences in the USA and Canada where he presented papers, and as well he has had material published in New Zealand and overseas on brown teal. Practical work experience has involved time spent with the NZ Wildlife Service on Maud Island, Codfish Island, Stewart Island and Farewell Spit, as well as brown teal research in Northland and on Great Barrier Island.

The decision to support Grant is seen by the Directors as a significant stage in the progress of the organisation and he will add immeasurably to the pool of expertise and experience that exists already within Ducks Unlimited. The research programme on brown teal will be able to carry on, despite the fact that budgetary considerations preclude the involvement of the Department of Conservation. As well, Grant will be involved in the new blue duck recovery programme, in raising corporate sponsorship (he has already coordinated the



Grant Dumbell

"Vanderbilt Swans" promotion — see DU News) and specific executive duties. Grant can be contacted on Auckland (09) 607396 or by writing to him at PO Box 44-176, Lower Hutt.



The happy group with the two vans hired by D.U. for the trip and ably driven by Alan Wilks and Grant Dumbell.

Ducks Unlimited's International Visitors

By Grant Dumbell

For a week in September, Ducks Unlimited hosted five couples from our sister organisations in America and Canada, and with the help of many members and friends throughout the country we were able to show them much of our work in New Zealand. The trip began on Saturday 10 September when Hazard and Gina Campbell arrived from Buffalo in upstate New York. Duncan and Margaret Sinclair, and Herb and

Jeanette Kebbel arrived early on Sunday morning from Aylmer, Ontario. Hazard is currently Chairman of the Board of Ducks Unlimited Inc., while Duncan is President of Ducks Unlimited Canada, and Herb is the Provincial Chairman for Ontario.

Over the weekend Jim Campbell, who was in Auckland was able to greet the arrivals and present everyone with a traditional New Zealand swanndri. These were kindly donated by Swanndri and embroidered with the Ducks Unlimited (NZ) logo. The bulk of the weekend was then devoted

to shaking jetlag and exploring some of Auckland's sights.

The programmed itinerary began on Monday when Fred and Sue Bailey hosted the visitors for a day on the Hauraki Gulf aboard their boat "MV Broadbill". Alan and Di Wilks also joined the party on Monday, Alan as second minibus driver, in preparation for the trip south.

Stew and Pat Morrison finally arrived on Tuesday morning after being delayed by the International Dateline, and we caught up with Stephen and Susan Denkers, from Ogden Utah, on Tuesday evening in Rotorua. Stew is the Executive Vice President of Ducks Unlimited Canada, and is based at the National Headquarters in Winnipeg, while Stephen is a Regional Vice President for Ducks Unlimited Inc in the Pacific Flyway.

The first stop out of Auckland was at Tony Flexman's to see his grey teal nest box project, then we went on to Dave McNeil's at Tirau for lunch. After lunch we drove into Rotorua where we sampled a hangi and were entertained by a Maori Concert Party in the evening.

Steve and Sue Denkers had spent four nights at Moose Lodge so they took us back there on Wednesday morning after we had visited Rainbow Springs and Hell's Gate. Ian and Dawn Pirani then hosted a barbecue lunch on their farm after which the afternoon was employed driving to Tokaanu, with afternoon tea at the Broadlands Wildlife Trust. The work of Dave Johnston and Norman Marsh was featured in the last issue of "Flight". Here a brown teal gave us a great display of aggression by removing a large billful of feathers from the back of a mallard. We then drove on to Huka Falls, then down to Tokaanu.

On Thursday morning Keith and Dulcie

Barnett had arranged a morning's fishing, and a perfect day for it. Two trout were landed for the lunch table and Keith presented Hazard and Herb with their certificates to record the event. The afternoon was then spent driving to the Wairarapa with magnificent views of the central mountains and the Rangitikei river valley.

In the Wairarapa, which was just recovering from another flood, the visitors were farm hosted with Ducks Unlimited members for two nights to coincide with the annual Eketahuna Chapter Dinner/Auction on Friday night. During the day Kevin Campbell flew the visitors over Ducks Unlimited's Lake Wairarapa projects by helicopter before Hazard, Duncan and Jim Campbell were interviewed for television about the \$40,000.00 cheque that was being presented to Ducks Unlimited (NZ). The afternoon also included the International Wetland and Waterfowl Symposium at the Wildlife Centre, which was attended by representatives of Ducks Unlimited, Department of Conservation, QEII National Trust, the World Wildlife Fund and the Acclimatisation Society, before everyone enjoyed the dinner/auction during the evening.

On Saturday we inspected Jim Campbell's ponding programme before driving through to Wellington for an evening flight to Christchurch. On Sunday morning we visited Lady Diana Isaac's Peacock Springs property for a guided tour and luncheon, before an aerial tour of the central South Island. We flew to Dunedin via Lake Ellesmere, the Canterbury high country, MacKenzie Basin and Sinclair Wetlands.



Three presidents: L to R Dr Duncan Sinclair D.U. Canada, Hazard K. Campbell Chairman of the Board, D.U. U.S.A., Jim Campbell, D.U.N.Z.

There we were hosted by Horrie who received the cheque from Ducks Unlimited Inc and Ducks Unlimited Canada on behalf of Ducks Unlimited (NZ). Hazard Campbell

was also presented with his life membership certificate before we bid our visitors farewell at the end of a busy but thoroughly enjoyable week.



Our Patron Lady Diana Isaac hosts the overseas visitors at her home at Peacock Springs in Christchurch



Ducks Unlimited is a rapidly growing organisation. We would like Flight to reflect members interests and would request that you fill in and return the membership survey form.

Membership Survey

Your name: _____

If any details on your "Flight" address label are incorrect please correct them and send it back to us.

Your age: _____ Your occupation: _____

1. Do you belong to any other conservation organisations? ☐ Yes ☐ No
2. Which ones? _____
3. How long have you been a member of DU? _____
4. How did you find out about DU? _____
5. Are you a regular duck hunter? ☐ Yes ☐ No
6. If you receive complimentary copies of "Flight" do you still wish to receive them? ☐ Yes ☐ No

POST TO: DUCKS UNLIMITED, P.O. BOX 44-176 LOWER HUTT

The Pearce Wetlands

By Brendan Coe

Ducks Unlimited has recently purchased 309 acres of wetland on the eastern shore of Lake Wairarapa. The land is, on the actual shoreline in front of the existing stopbank and is a flat featureless area of grassland that floods regularly when the northwest wind pushes the lake waters over it. This area lies directly in front of the property of Mr Mark Pearce and it is the last significant piece of privately owned lake shore left. It is bounded to the south by a line near the Oporua spillway and to the north by a stopbank, separating it from the property of Mr P. Moran. The area would have been completely dried out by the proposed Polder scheme which, for those who are not familiar with it, proposed another stopbank or polder being formed further out in the lake to prevent the lake water being blown across the land, thus preserving more pasture. The area now comes under the umbrella of the forthcoming Lake Wairarapa Conservation Order initiated by the Acclimatisation Society movement, and thus will always be protected. Most of the rest of the important eastern lake shore is owned by the Department of Conservation who maintain a watch-brief on the lake, and it is fair to say that

the area is reasonably well secured as far as habitat and the bird populations are concerned. So why should Ducks Unlimited buy it?

This question has been put to me from various quarters and when the full facts of the matter are considered, as outlined here, I think the reasons will be obvious. Firstly, the land was for sale. It had been put on the market by Mr Pearce who no longer required its ownership because the constant flooding of the area precluded its use for all year round grazing and also because he wanted to see it preserved in perpetuity as a sanctuary for the birds. The Department of Conservation were keen to purchase the land to put in place the last major piece of the jigsaw puzzle that would have seen most of the vital eastern shoreline in their hands and this was a situation that was considered ideal by all parties concerned. Unfortunately the massive staff and budget cuts that rocked the Department in September of 1988 put a stop to their plan to purchase. Enter Ducks Unlimited.

Having said that, let us consider some of the features of the Pearce Wetlands that led to the decision to purchase. The first one that

impresses the casual observer is its size. I have, as have many members, looked at a lot of wetlands all around New Zealand. From farm ponds, to lagoons and river backwaters to the majestic Sinclair Wetlands, and I can tell you that areas of wetland some 300 acres in size are almost non-existent in this country. This area we are discussing is one of the biggest privately owned areas left. That Ducks Unlimited were in the fortunate position to be able to consider purchase was seen as a stroke of luck by the Directors.

The next consideration was the location and the Pearce Wetlands is perfectly situated from all viewpoints. It is in the North Island and it was perceived that a major project was needed there. It is close to a major city which is important for reasons of land appreciation values and it is part, and the most important part, of the biggest shallow, freshwater wetland area in the North Island. Let me quote from that definitive work "Habitat Requirements of Wetland Birds in the Lake Wairarapa Wetlands" by P J Moore, C G Ogle, and K T Moynihan: New Zealand Wildlife Service occasional publication No. 5, published August 1984. This book was given to me by Mr Lynn Harris, Publicity Officer for the NZ Wildlife

Service, in his office one day in 1985. Although grateful at the time, I never realised the effect this book would have and the directions it would lead to with regard to the Wairarapa Wetlands. "Lake Wairarapa and its adjacent wetlands form the largest wetland complex in the southern half of the North Island." "The eastern shore of the lake is the most significant area for wildlife in terms of both numbers and variety of birds." These two statements indicate the importance of the lake and the eastern shore and they alone are an indication of the value of the Pearce property.

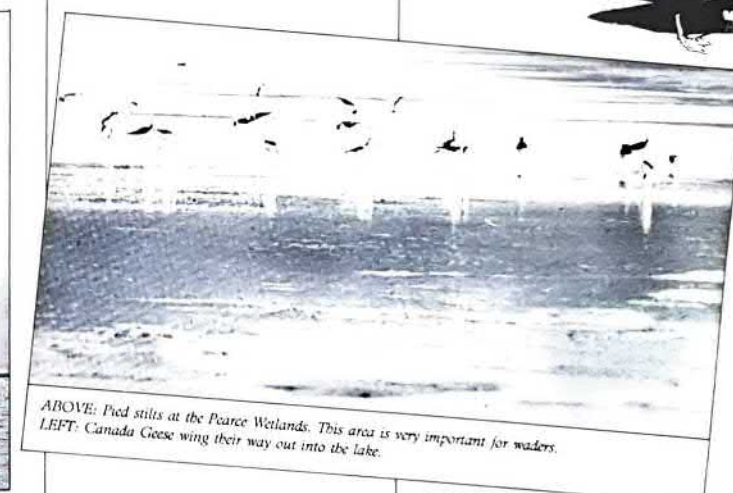
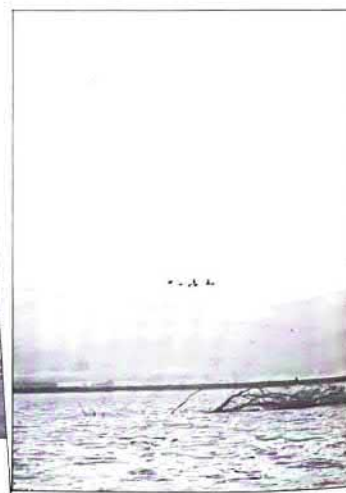
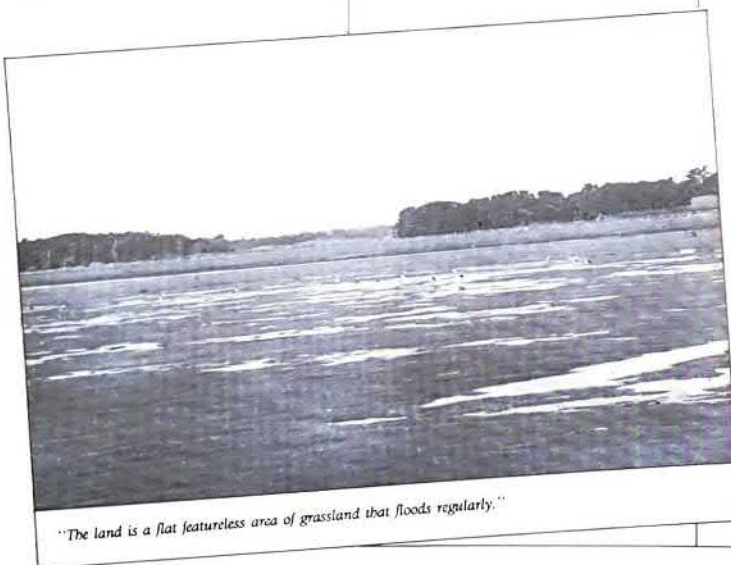
The current and prospective value of the area is worth discussing. Most wetlands in New Zealand occur in rural areas and are subject to the rural land valuation system. There is no valuation system for natural areas be they wetlands, rivers or mountains. This means that wetlands have a low commercial value when assessed as farmland, the corollary of which is that they are not too expensive to buy. As an interesting digression, wetlands are one of the few natural areas that can be purchased. Mountains, rivers, stretches of coastline and tracts of native bush are, with some exceptions, mostly locked up or out of reach of all but the Government, but swamps can still be bought cheaply. The bird populations of the Pearce Wetlands give the lie to their real value. Here is the most impressive and important aspect to this magnificent area. I will start with the wader species. One of the most fragile of all bird families, waders need shallow areas that ebb and flow regularly. They need wide open spaces for security and they need short grass swards for comfort. Some of our most rare visitors occur on these wetlands. From Siberia come the far-eastern curlews, the sharp tailed sandpiper, greenshank (rare), lesser yellowlegs (rare) and the pectoral sandpiper. In all thirteen species of Arctic migrant waders occur at the lake, as well as New Zealand and vagrant waders, the majority on the eastern shore; the favoured

area being "north of the Oporua spillway" — The Pearce Wetlands. The rare black stilt has been sighted here and the pied stilt is there in hundreds. Oyster catchers, gulls, spurring plovers, all are common and together with the rarer species they combine to make their presence the most important feature of the Pearce Wetlands.

One of the main populations of Canada geese in the North Island live on this property. As readers will know, Ducks Unlimited have a vested interest in the North Island population of these birds and the several hundred that live here were an added incentive when purchase was being discussed. We now come to the ducks. If there are any areas in New Zealand where you can see more ducks at any time of year, I do not know of them. The amount of waterfowl is staggering, especially on a windy day. Mallard are present in their thousands, shoveler wheel across the face of the wind in flocks of fifteen or twenty. Grey teal flight the area regularly in big numbers, grey ducks, paradise shelducks, hundreds of black swans, literally thousands of birds, all concentrated off the Pearce area. They don't like the western shoreline of Lake Wairarapa, it is too deep. The same applies to Alsops Bay and Kumenga and the cutoff at the southern end. The waterfowl population on Lake Wairarapa is concentrated fairly off the Pearce property. I will refer readers to the map "Figure 2" in the previously mentioned publication which shows the lake divided into study areas. It is appropriate to quote from the book by Moore, Ogle and Moynihan their comments regarding waterfowl on the Pearce property. "Shore section S.4, north of Oporua Floodway, was numerically the most important part of the wetlands in all seasons except summer, when it was surpassed by the average count for S.12, western Alsops Bay, because of large numbers of paradise shelduck. In addition to high numbers of the common black swan and mallard, S.4 consistently had higher

numbers of the less common New Zealand shoveler, grey teal, grey duck, paradise shelduck, Canada goose and waders than most other parts of the wetlands. As for waterfowl, waders were numerous in S.3 but particularly abundant in S.4, especially during winter. Arctic migrant waders favoured this area and it also attracted most species of resident and internally migrating waders, creating a higher species-richness than existed on other parts of the shore." Why the Pearce wetlands are favoured by the birds is discussed in the book as follows. "The fact that S.4 was so popular with most species of waterfowl and waders suggests that this area has special qualities not found elsewhere. The most visible feature is the intricate mosaic of small pools on native turf flats between long backwaters and waters of the lake. This provides a much larger feeding area, particularly of shallow wading zones, than in other areas where smoother turf flats meet water at a straighter interface." Rare plant species occur too and botanists state that the known flora of the lake and wetlands comprises 310 species, some rare.

So there it is, the story of the Pearce Wetland. The future for the area is now doubly safeguarded and we will, with the co-operation of Mark Pearce, be conducting organised visits for interested members at various times. A management plan will also be drawn up and a management committee will be formed. Discussions with the National Trust will also take place. We have appointed Mark Pearce as Manager of the property on a day to day basis and he will control the grazing regime as well as oversee and care for the area in general. As with the Sinclair Wetlands, it would make a magnificent area for waterfowl study and research, so badly lacking in this country.



ABOVE: Pied stilts at the Pearce Wetlands. This area is very important for waders.
LEFT: Canada Geese wing their way out into the lake.

"The land is a flat featureless area of grassland that floods regularly."



Broadlands Wildfowl trust

In the last issue of *Flight* we featured this area, but this new panorama has come to hand and is worth publication. The planning and work of Mr Norman Marsh and Mr Dave Johnson is obvious in the photograph and represent hundreds of hours work by Mr Johnson in particular. When the area's origins as a grassed paddock with a small stream are considered, the result is truly superb.

ALL IN THE CASE OF DUTY: OR A HARD EARNED LESSON

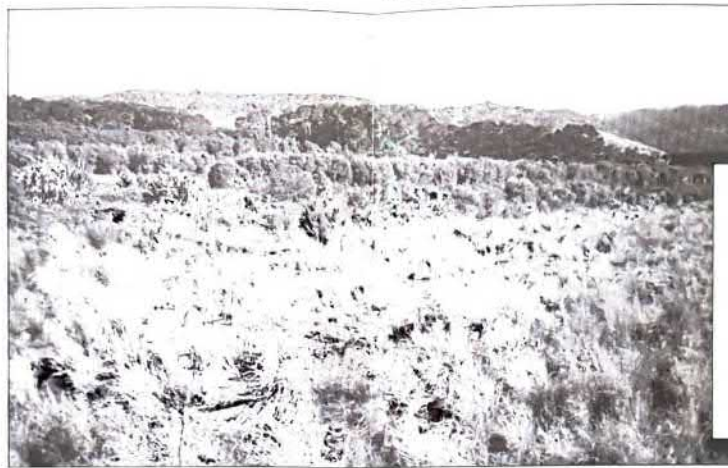
Wild cats are amongst the most destructive predators of birdlife. The following is an extract from a letter written to her grandfather by the daughter of a certain wildlife ranger (who wishes to remain anonymous) and illustrates the hazards of dealing with such predators barehanded.

"The first thing is that Dad can't write to you any more, because his hand got bitten by a cat. I bet you're wondering how Dad got bitten by a cat! Well, it's a long story, a story that every doctor on the Whangarei Hospital Board probably knows by now. It started with Dad skinning possums on a big slope up on a hill. He saw a cat that he had been after for ages, running down the slope. Of course, it was wild, so he figured he wouldn't be able to catch it, even though it was a danger to the brown teal. Then he saw Mike on the ground directing him towards a patch in the grass, screaming that it was still there. Mike directed him right up to the cat, and when he saw it he tore after

it until he caught it halfway down the slope. When he caught it he fastened his hands around its neck, and it fastened its teeth into his hand. After a long struggle of life and death he finally strangled it. There was a catch to it all, even though he probably did save some brown teal ducklings. The catch was that he got an infected hand from the cat bite, because the cat bite went so deep. So far he's gone to two hospitals already, the Whangarei Hospital (where I was born) and a local surgery somewhere. His hand is still very bad now, so he can't really do much at the moment."

The lesson was well taken as a later letter from his wife shows:

"C shot another wild cat today, with his left hand which I thought was rather clever. He was checking a valley for brown teal when Brock (his dog) scared this cat up a tree — so it wasn't the drama of the first event."



Tim and Matthew release two birds onto their new home.

Reclaimed lagoon in old river bed

Ducks Unlimited recently funded the restoration of a 2.5 hectare lagoon in the Northern Wairarapa. The area was originally drained by a Catchment Board subsidy and was well known for its grey duck population. Work was carried out using a digger and a bulldozer and coordinated by Ducks Unlimited Director Allan Elliott.

The reclaimed area filling with water

GEESE RELEASE

A group of keen Ducks Unlimited members came to the Wairarapa in February of 1988 to gather up some 50 young Canada geese. The birds were the young from that breeding season and the males were colour coded blue on their white face patch and the females red. These birds were taken and released on dune lakes in the Northern Manawatu and the photographs show two of the "gatherers" with two of the "gatherees" going to the lake that is now their new home.

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DUCKS UNLIMITED (NZ) INC
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 1988

| | 1988 \$ | 1987 \$ |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| INCOME | | |
| Subscriptions - Life | 3,278 | 1,680 |
| - Full | 8,629 | 10,075 |
| - Supporter | 10 | 100 |
| - Junior | 128 | 194 |
| - Trade | 895 | 1,491 |
| - Sponsor | 934 | 1,152 |
| TOTAL SUBSCRIPTIONS | \$13,874 | \$14,692 |
| PLUS OTHER INCOME | | |
| Advertising Income "Flight" | 1,700 | 2,262 |
| AGM and Conference Income | 32,587 | 28,008 |
| Donations | 54,255 | 24,408 |
| Grants - DOC | 38,000 | - |
| - GRII Trust | 25,000 | - |
| ISSAC Wildlife Trust Open Day | 15,000 | - |
| Interest | 7,549 | 5,083 |
| Profit (Loss) on Sale of other Items | 210 | 81 |
| Raffle Income | (5,164) | 217 |
| Sundry Income | 6,863 | 6,328 |
| | 3,289 | 924 |
| TOTAL INCOME | \$191,133 | \$82,001 |

DUCKS UNLIMITED (NZ) INC
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 1988

| | 1988 \$ | 1987 \$ |
|--|------------------|-----------------|
| LESS EXPENDITURE | | |
| Audit and Accountancy Fees | 2,000 | 750 |
| Advertising | 565 | 94 |
| Bank Fees and Credit Card Commission | 4,198 | - |
| Depreciation | 4,727 | - |
| Duplicating and Printing | 13,675 | 10,390 |
| General Expenses | 307 | 494 |
| Interest | 1,521 | - |
| Operation "Grete" | - | 379 |
| "Patona" | 21,226 | 3,815 |
| "Branta" | 272 | 30 |
| "Whio" | - | 151 |
| "Mute Swan" | 843 | (150) |
| "Wetlands" | 12,235 | 8,638 |
| "Sinclair Wetlands" | 14,357 | 9,909 |
| AGM and Conference Expenditure | 4,801 | 12,247 |
| Travelling Expenses - Board Meetings | 8,427 | 10,559 |
| Postage | 1,128 | 1,147 |
| Tolls | 1,756 | 1,072 |
| Operations Research | 500 | - |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | \$92,538 | \$59,525 |
| EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE | \$100,595 | \$22,478 |

DUCKS UNLIMITED (NZ) INC
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
AS AT 31 MARCH 1988

| | Note | 1988 \$ | 1987 \$ |
|---------------------------------------|------|------------------|------------------|
| CURRENT ASSETS | | | |
| Bank | | 400 | 3,490 |
| Investment Account | | 6,700 | 6,700 |
| GST Recoverable | | 14,779 | - |
| Debtors | | 25,000 | 26,654 |
| Term Deposit | | 13,351 | 19,633 |
| Stock - Books | | 1,130 | 1,300 |
| - Other Items | | 4,175 | 4,358 |
| | | \$65,535 | \$62,135 |
| CURRENT LIABILITIES | | | |
| Sinclair Wetlands Bank Account | | 44,292 | - |
| Sundry Creditor | | 26,291 | 1,965 |
| Bank Loan (Secured) | | 70,000 | - |
| | | 140,583 | 1,965 |
| WORKING CAPITAL/(DEFICIT) | | (75,048) | 60,170 |
| FIXED ASSETS | 3 | 308,865 | 73,052 |
| NET ASSETS | | 233,817 | 133,222 |
| ACCUMULATED FUNDS AND RESERVES | | | |
| Balance 1 April | | 60,222 | 37,744 |
| Excess of Income over Expenditure | | 100,595 | 22,478 |
| Balance 31 March 1988 | | 160,817 | 60,222 |
| Revaluation Reserve | | 73,000 | 73,000 |
| | | \$233,817 | \$133,222 |

Chairman *J.C. Campbell* Treasurer *G. Selous*

D.U. News

Weather service cuts worry

Damage from cyclones and storms may be greater in future because of cuts in the weather forecasting service, says the Meteorological Society.

Meeting at the Agscape conference in Havelock North, members of the society condemned restructuring, cut-backs and proposed staff redundancies at the Meteorological Service, saying they would lead to a deterioration in the weather service.

This would give New Zealand less advance warning of weather disasters such as Cyclone Bola, with more devastating effects to life and property, said the society in a statement.

Last month's Budget left the Meteorological Service, part of the Ministry of Transport, with 20 percent less funds than last year.

Director John Hickman said cuts to staffing and programmes were inevitable.

The service's weather observation network has shrunk by one-third over the past four years as other Government departments and local bodies have withdrawn observation services which were previously free.

Meteorological Society president Jim McGregor said the closure of weather observation stations at Whangarei, Tauranga and Whakatane put northern parts of the country at much greater risk from tropical cyclones. And now it had been announced that observing stations operated by the

Airways Corporation for the Meteorological Service face the axe.

"This will compound problems already experienced through the earlier massive reduction of the observing network and proposed budget and staffing cuts at the Ministry of Transport," said Dr McGregor.

Society members urged the Government to recognise that "an effective, efficient and adequately-funded comprehensive meteorological service is a national necessity."

"Any reduction of the nation's weather services would be a gross error of judgment and a very costly false economy," members said.

Kotuku seen at Henley Lake

The sighting of a kotuku (White Heron) at Masterton's Henley Lake has excited bird-lovers.

The sighting, believed to be the first, was made by Masterton Ornithological Society member Dr Tenick Dennison.

Masterton Licensing Trust Board chairman Mr Ricky Long told yesterday's meeting the sighting had heightened interest in the Lake.

The potential for more and varied sojourns by winged visitors may be realised following the completion of the wetlands area of the complex, Mr Long said.

The public will also have the chance to view the birdlife population at Henley, with

the provision of hides throughout the wetlands area, and with the alternative raising and lowering of levels between the lakes creating tidal feeding zones for the birds, board member Steve Blakemore said.

Both Ducks Unlimited and the wetlands society are making able contributions to the lake's attractions.

The development of the full lake system is progressing he said with bulldozers coming in to begin another phase soon.

Twenty different varieties of flowering trees have been planted.

Ministers herald conservation corps

Youth Affairs Minister Phil Goff and Conservation Minister Helen Clark launched a conservation corps with \$2.25 million for pilot projects yesterday.

The volunteer corps, modelled on a California scheme, was designed to give people aged 16 to 25 a chance to carry out conservation projects, the ministers said.

The corps would be tested during six to 12-month pilot projects and participants would be paid a training allowance.

Organisations such as conservation, education and recreation groups, local bodies, government departments, Maori trusts and companies would be expected to contribute.



The brown teal holding Aviary at Jim Campbells.

Work could include tree-planting in erosion-scarred areas or on waste ground in towns, fencing native forest and pest control.

But Opposition associate employment spokesman Roger Maxwell said it was a pitiful response to the growing number of unemployed.

With a funds ceiling of \$2.25 million it would cater for a maximum of a few hundred people.

Dinner for Ducks Unlimited

The Eketahuna Chapter of Ducks Unlimited raised \$6000 for their wildlife preservation cause at the annual dinner held at Solway Park Hotel.

Four thousand dollars came from a call auction of a wide variety of items and \$2000 from a silent auction.

Ten overseas guests were among the 180 people at the dinner.

New bird protection role for polder site

The following newspaper article appeared in the Wairarapa Times Age.

A once-contentious strip of world-recognised wetlands on the eastern edge of Lake Wairarapa has been saved as a home for birds.

Ducks Unlimited, a national waterfowl and wetlands conservation group, has clinched the purchase of 150 hectares of land once intended for a massive stop-banking polder scheme and reclaimed dairy farms.

Largely because of the area's high wildlife value, the polder scheme was abandoned by the Wairarapa Catchment Board three years ago.

The national secretary of Ducks Unlimited, Neil Hayes of Wellington, said today the organisation paid \$110,000 to secure the land from Kahutara farmer Mark Pearce.

"We clinched the deal after long negotiations. The Department of Conservation had an option on it but pulled out and Mr Pearce accepted our back-up offer," he said.

The wetlands, now to be known as the Pearce wetlands, are recognised as one of the best of their type in the world.

Mr Hayes said they are a sanctuary for arctic waders which migrate in thousands

every northern hemisphere winter.

"Migratory birds from Siberia and many Asian countries spend the New Zealand summer months at the Pearce wetlands. The species include the bar-tailed godwit, the lesser knot, the sharp-tailed sandpiper and the golden plover.

"There are also a large number of rare New Zealand birds there including the grey duck, scaup, grey teal and Canada geese," he said.

The organisation will consult with other major wildlife groups to produce a management plan for the Pearce wetlands.

This will involve access for ornithology and research and an observation hide is to be built to give clear views over the wetlands which run for two kilometres along the lake edge.

The wetlands purchase was the first to be made by Ducks Unlimited which is about to launch another nationwide fundraising venture and membership drive.

Ducks Unlimited already owns the world-renowned Sinclair wetlands near Dunedin which is ranked in the world's top ten but this was gifted to the organisation four years ago.

The operations manager for the Wairarapa Catchment Board, Steve Blakemore, said the board welcomes the purchase by Ducks Unlimited.

Mr Blakemore said the polder scheme had been abandoned and there was no conflict whatever between the board and the wetlands new owners.

In fact the board has a policy which recognises the wildlife in the area and works towards helping in its protection and enhancement, he said.

Historically Lake Wairarapa, said Mr Blakemore, used to fluctuate between being a dustbowl to a huge flooded area.

This was in the days before the lower valley development scheme which many people now felt had improved the lake's wildlife, he said.

Ducks Unlimited ownership of the Pearce wetlands should make the overall management of Lake Wairarapa a little easier, said Mr Blakemore.

Sponsorship for Royal Swan

Vanderbilt Parfums of Auckland have recently sponsored Operation Royal Swan with a donation of \$800.00. They have also

become Sponsor Members of Ducks Unlimited and have adopted a pair of mute swans as the "Vanderbilt Swans".

Mark Newcomb accepted the cheque at the press release of the new "Vanderbilt" fragrance in Auckland. The perfume features a swan motif and Ducks Unlimited provided a pair of mute swans for the function. They spent four hours in the White Heron Lodge swimming pool, which had been suitably vegetated with trees and ferns, as a backdrop for the luncheon, before being transferred to Charlie Money at Ruawai as part of the breeding programme.

1988 DU National Raffle Results

Winners of the 1988 national raffle, which was drawn on September 21st, were as follows:

| | | |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------|
| 1st No 1111 | S Hanson | Napier |
| 2nd No 4184 | Cliff Bull | Upper Hutt |
| 3rd No 5001 | Staglands | Upper Hutt |
| 4th No 7232 | Shirley Barnett | THC Tokaanu |
| 5th No 3723 | Grey Gordon | Dunedin |
| 6th No 4168 | J A Wilson | Dunedin |

Our congratulations to these winners.

Once again the raffle proved very popular, with around 80% of the DU membership buying a book of raffle tickets. The gross income was nearly \$9,400, with a net income, for DU's wetland projects, of some \$7,000. Both figures being around \$2,000 up on the 1987 results. Our thanks to all members for their strong support and thanks to Mark Newcomb, the raffle organiser, for again performing a superb job.

It is expected that the 1989 raffle will again promote wildlife art.

Minutes of the 1988 Annual Meeting

It has been decided that AGM minutes will no longer be published in 'Flight'. Any member wishing to receive a copy of the 1988 AGM minutes, prior to the 1989 AGM, should write to Box 44-176, Lower Hutt.

1989 Annual Conference

The 1989 Annual Conference of Ducks Unlimited (NZ) will be held at THC Tokaanu over July 8th and 9th, 1989. There will be a



The Royal Swan project has been one of our most successful

strict limit of 100 people for dinner and the registration will be \$50 per head. Members are advised that the final date for registration will be 31.5.89.

Predator Control

The FENN traps for stoat, ferret and rat control have been selling well. DU still has a limited number of traps available — for \$20 each; including GST & Post, from Box 44-176, Lower Hutt. In a future edition of 'Flight' we will be publishing a comprehensive run-down on the use of predator control traps, and on the need to establish predator control programmes in New Zealand.

Sinclair Wetlands Management Plan

Copies of the Plan have also been selling well and are still available for \$20 per copy from Box 44-176, Lower Hutt.

Progress at the Sinclair Wetlands

During September a large lagoon was created in front of the public viewing lounge at the Sinclair Wetlands Educational Centre and with a grain breakfast being provided by Horrie Sinclair a considerable number of waterfowl, of several species, have been encouraged to use the lagoon. Work has also started on the walkway to Lonely Island and it is hoped that this will be finished early in 1989. A viewing hide will then be erected on the series of ponds which will eventually hold the large collection of captive waterfowl.

Good numbers of people are already visiting the centre and its future as a major tourist



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attraction is guaranteed; but there is still much work to be done.

Membership

Well known International Ornithologist Mr Don Merton of Chatham Island black robin fame has joined D.U. as a sponsor member and Dr Duncan Sinclair, President of D.U. Canada has also joined as a life member. The renewal rate has been good and little resistance has been felt from the increased membership fee for 1988/89. The Otago Acclimatisation Society also sent \$55 for a sponsor membership which was well received by the Board.

Operation Whio

As a result of the comprehensive Blue Duck Management seminar held at the National Wildlife Centre in April, the Research Section of the Dept of Conservation has produced a "Conservation Strategy for Blue Duck". In booklet form, and compiled by Dr Murray Williams, the strategy has set down — *The Reasons for Concern, National Conservation Objectives, Components to achieve National Objectives, Management Procedures, Research Needs*, plus a series of appendices, which cover, Field and Office Record Cards (for survey work), Timing and Techniques of Surveys, Capture and Banding Techniques, Criteria for Population Enhancement, Criteria for Choosing Site for Population Enhancement, Suggestions for Local Population Enhancement, Biology of Blue Duck, and Blue Duck literature.

All in all a very well prepared document. Of particular interest to DU and its members is subsection 4 of the section on Management Procedures, which covers:

4. POPULATION ESTABLISHMENT AND ENHANCEMENT

Purpose: — to attempt enhancement of some existing population isolates and to attempt the establishment of new populations.

4A. Identifying Populations for Enhancement and Unoccupied Habitat

During the 1988-1992 period no active enhancement or establishment is envisaged. Instead, this time period should be devoted to necessary preparatory work as suggested below.

Key Personnel:

- At regional/district level, officers designated responsible for blue duck surveys and related blue duck management activities.
- Convenor, Blue Duck captive-breeding group.

Principal Activities:

- (1) Identify existing small populations suitable for enhancement or habitat suitable for population establishment.
- (2) Identify a source of birds for release [wild birds may be translocated from an existing healthy population within the region, or captive-reared birds may be released].
- (3) Prepare a local enhancement or establishment plan in which all planned activities are chronicled and costed (see Appendix 6 for guidelines). To provide inter-regional liaison, such plans should be available for perusal by Blue Duck Management Liaison Group.



Neil and Sylvia Hayes at the blue duck aviary at the Wildfowl Trust Centre at Arundel.

Comments:

- (1) Identity of populations suitable for enhancement or localities suitable for population establishment are likely to be derived from region/district — wide surveys of blue duck distribution and status.
- (2) Wild birds being considered for translocation should be from a large, viable population that is subjected to regular monitoring aside from those which are part of the regional monitoring scheme.
- (3) Captive-reared birds being considered for release should come from breeders participating in the captive-breeding scheme (see 4B below) and, where possible, be progeny of birds derived from within or adjacent to the watershed in which the birds are to be released.

4B. Captive Breeding Programme

There is a need for 30 captive-reared birds to be available annually by 1992 to fuel initial enhancement/establishment programmes.

Key Personnel:

- A 'Captive Breeding Group' comprising:—
- (i) three members of Ducks Unlimited, one of whom shall be convenor and shall be the DU nominee on the Blue Duck Management Liaison Group, and one of whom shall be a participating breeder, and
 - (ii) Conservation Officer (Protected and Endangered Species), PES Directorate, Dept of Conservation, Central Office.

Principal Activities:

- (i) The Captive Breeding Group shall produce a captive-breeding plan to the satisfaction of the blue duck Management Liaison Group in which aims of the programme and captive management procedures are outlined,
- (ii) identify availability and/or need for breeding stock
- (iii) select and supply participating breeders,
- (iv) maintain a register which records the origin or parentage and breeding performance of all birds in captivity,
- (v) In consultation with the blue duck Management Liaison Group initiate release of 1990 and 1991 progeny onto a selected river to determine survival of captive-reared birds in the wild.
- (vi) Through the blue duck Management Liaison Group, maintain a liaison with all relevant regional offices of DOC and, upon request, arrange for birds to be supplied for enhancement/establishment programmes.

Timetable:

- Captive Breeding Group established immediately at discretion of Ducks Unlimited.
- Captive breeding plan prepared by June 1989 and participating breeders supplied with birds by that date.
- Trial release plan prepared by June 1990.

Comments: — funding of the activities of the Captive Breeding Group and of the costs incurred by participating breeders shall be by way of

sponsorship arranged through Ducks Unlimited."

The Strategy will be controlled by "A blue duck Management Liaison Group", in which DU will have a representative.

The Strategy really cranks up the blue duck preservation programme in a very meaningful way and we are sure that DU members will be as pleased as the DU Directors to see this happening. From a captive breeding viewpoint we will need several more members to become involved in the captive breeding of blue ducks. If you are interested in joining the programme, and are prepared to outlay considerable funds in constructing the required design of aviary, please drop Neil Hayes a note at Box 44-176, Lower Hutt. If anyone would like a xeroxed copy of the "Conservation Strategy, please send \$10 to Box 44-176. Aviary requirements are being drawn up and we hope to publish them in a forthcoming issue of 'Flight'.

Blue Ducks in the UK

Whilst in the UK during September, Neil Hayes managed to catch up with the only blue ducks outside NZ when he visited the Wildfowl Trust's centre at Arundel in Sussex. The Trust had successfully reared one female last season and had just introduced her to the spare male that was on hand. Before doing this the Trust's Curator, Andrew Dawny, had decided that the male should be removed from his aviary and introduced to the female on neutral territory. This has obviously worked extremely well as the pair looked as though they had been together for years. The breeding pair also looked in prime condition and are expected to breed again in the UK spring.

Captive Breeding of Blue Ducks in NZ

No breeding has yet been reported by the four DU members holding pairs of blue ducks, but the National Wildlife Centre is experiencing a very successful season. Hopefully some birds will be available for the captive breeding programme.

OPERATION PATEKE

Northland release

A further release of brown teal took place at the Mimiwhangata Farm Park in early October, when 46 captive reared birds were released. All of the 46 being released directly from the boxes and the others being released 2 weeks later from an aviary which had been erected on site — adjacent to the lagoon. This procedure all being part of the process to determine the best method of release. Experiments have also taken part this year to determine the best time of the year for the release of captive reared brown teal. Further experiments will continue next year when the 8 hectare lake on the Purenui Peninsula, near Kerikeri, will be used as a release site in late January.

The releases at Mimiwhangata were ably carried out by Grant Dumbell, Chris Smuts-Kennedy — DoC officer in charge at the Mimiwhangata Farm Park, and Chris Bone — DU member who farms close to Mimiwhangata.

1988-89 Captive Breeding Progress

This breeding season looks like being another very successful one for brown teal, with Ron Munro, Neil Hayes and Charlie Money reporting in late October that they

had already reared over 30 teal between them.

By late October the most of the birds removed from Great Barrier Island last December had been flock mated and distributed to members. Several new participants have joined the captive breeding programme and we welcome the Willowbank Wildlife Reserve, Christchurch; Paul McCarthy, Murupara, and Russell Langdon of Ashburton to the project.

Quite by accident DU has managed to acquire a further influx of brown teal from Great Barrier. In September five very small brown teal orphans were spotted by a Great Barrier Islander. A message was relayed to DoC Regional Office in Auckland, from there to Grant Dumbell and within three hours five ducklings had been captured and delivered to Heritage Park at Mt Wellington, where they are being reared. All in all a great exercise in conservation and co-operation.

Brown Teal in the UK

Neil Hayes also caught up with brown teal at several Wildfowl Trust centres in the UK,

and at Peakirk he managed to see a complete display mating. It is extremely rare to see brown teal displaying and we can only assume they had heard that Neil Hayes would be visiting.

The Wildfowl Trust continues to breed good numbers of brown teal and from their centre at Martin Mere in Lancashire, pairs have been distributed to local private breeders.

It was in 1979 that Ducks Unlimited sent brown teal to the Wildfowl Trust — as part of a safety measure for the preservation of the species.

OPERATION ROYAL SWAN

The news from President, Jim Campbell, is that his pair of Mute's have again done their thing for the second year running when they hatched five cygnets in early November. Last year the pair reared four in their first breeding season, to give our Royal Swan projects a great boost. Several other pairs with members have also been reported as sitting on eggs. The waiting list is still fairly long, but we are getting through it.

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| D.U. Flags (62cm x 44cm) | \$40.00 |
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