

Bush Telegraph

March 2023



News from January—February 2022 and key events coming up in March—May 2023

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Welcome Bradley From Africa to Aotearoa

Rotokare Scenic Reserve Trust is delighted to announce the arrival of our new General Manager, Dr. Bradley Schroder. Having worked in the tourism, conservation and wildlife industries for the past three decades, Bradley brings abundant knowledge and experience. Bradley has worked his way up in the conservation industry over several years and comes to Rotokare from his most recent position at Peace Parks Foundation, where he managed a 1.1 million-hectare Limpopo National Park in Mozambique. Alongside this, he has gained remarkable experience from his work in South Africa, Malawi, Botswana and Australia.

Bradley has already been getting stuck into mahi at the reserve but will be away for a couple of weeks running a marathon in Antarctica (in a 12kg Rhino suit, raising money for Rhino conservation, no less!)

Haere rā Sophie



The entire whānau here at Rotokare is excited to welcome Bradley into our community. We are confident that with his experience and passion for conservation, we will be able to do even more to protect our natural taonga and provide a safe haven for the many species of New Zealand native wildlife.

Of course, welcoming a new GM means a farewell for former manager, Sophie Tucker. Sophie become fully immersed in the natural wonders of Aotearoa here at Rotokare after previously moving from the UK. She now moves on to explore further, venturing her way down to Wanaka. We thank and acknowledge her for the hard work she has put in over the past 18 months in keeping and elevating Rotokare to what it is today; an award-winning conservation reserve that connects people to nature.

Lyn Hart, Catherine,
+ anonymous for
donations of sugar/
cash for hihi feeding

Peter Coles & Marion
Adlam for offers of
Educational resource
donations

**THANK
YOU**

Eltham Athletics for
donating a portion of
the Nexans fun run
proceeds

All those who came
along to our New Bush
Classroom working
bees—awesome mahi!

Biodiversity



BATS

Over February Dave Bell organized a round of bat monitoring here at the reserve. 15 devices were deployed that detect the bats echolocation frequencies and count each “bat pass” in it’s vicinity. Over the course of 10 days, ~250 bat passes were recorded. The numbers were down on the previous survey, but not enough to be concerning—more likely to be attributed to sub-par weather!

Picture: RNZ



HIHI

Another successful Hihi breeding season has flown by. The last active known nests (within nestboxes), are expected to fledge over the next 1-2 weeks. Mhairi is on site from the 6th-16th for the post-breeding survey and to catch as many unbanded chicks as possible, especially those that fledged from natural nests. It’s awesome to have such a high rate of natural nesting here at the Reserve, a tribute to habitat restoration here.



LIZARDS

Lizard monitoring continues with another round monitoring at artificial refuges across monitoring lines. Plenty of lizards were found, the usual suspects: Goldstripe geckos, Forest geckos, brown skinks, and ornate skinks. The team also had a treat by finding a few peripatus. Night time spotlight monitoring has been undertaken by an external contractor who found an abundance of goldstripes.

Taranaki Kōhanga Kiwi at Rotokare Project

A collaborative partnership between Taranaki Kiwi Trust and Rotokare Scenic Reserve

All monitored male kiwi have finished breeding for the season. Overall, there were 7 successful nests, with an estimated 11 eggs.

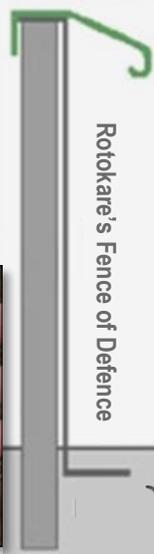
Jess, in her new role as TKKR Kiwi Ranger, has launched into the busy Annual health check & transmitter change season. have Robbie (photo to right, held by Jenny O) was the lucky first of the bunch. Robbie was determined to stay in his deep burrow, with it taking the team three attempts to successful catch him.



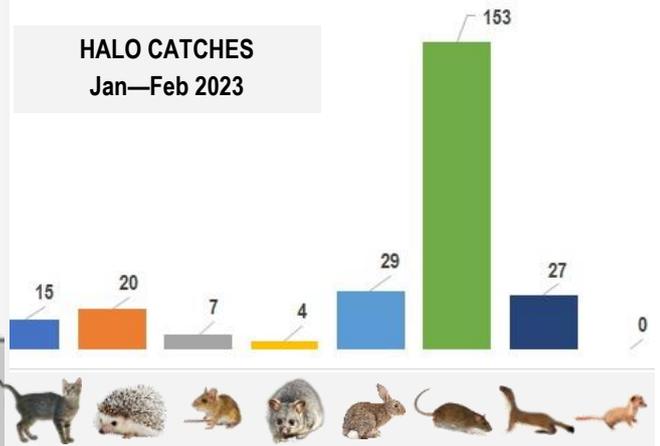
Founder male Robbie with TKKR volunteer Jenny O

Biosecurity

The latest round of tracking card monitoring shows nothing but insects and geckos (and the occasional naughty bird!) running through our tracking cards. Another win for the Sanctuary, and reinforces that the hard work of volunteers & staff is continuing to protect the reserve’s integrity. In comparison cards deployed **outside** the reserve for Education have collected a lot of activity (pictures right). Putting into perspective the sanctity of the reserves pest-free status.



The Halo is a 4,500ha intensively-trapped buffer zone extending around and beyond Rotokare



Sanctuary

Water Supply Project (March 14-16th March) - volunteer help needed for temporary fence removal, biosecurity measures, and water pipe installation. Please get in touch if you have experience in this area.

Kiwi Dog Catching Week (Mid-Late March) - Kiwi dogs will be onsite and in full swing tracking down kiwi across the reserve in preparation for translocation season.

Full Sanctuary Tracking Card Run (April) - this ongoing job is vital for monitoring biosecurity and the key to keeping Rotokare pest-free. As always, many hands make light work!

Events

TRC Predator-Free 2050 Event (16th April) - TRC has organized Predator Free 2050 Pukeiti Interactive Exhibition, being held 16 – 30/04/2023. Rotokare is attending on 16th April with a stall and connecting with the public. If you are interested in promoting our awesome project—contact us to get involved.

Enviroschools Biodiversity Day (23rd May) - various conservation/education organization are joining us onsite for an awesome day to educate ākongā about Aotearoa's biodiversity. Organized by Enviroschools and hosted at Rotokare.



Rotokare Ambassadors

This month we welcomed 12 new Youth Ambassadors into the junior programme. All our juniors from last year signed on to the senior programme and came along to support the new cohort. While the tamariki were nervous on their first day, they soon loosened up. Another bunch of passionate wildlife enthusiasts to bring into our community to nurture and develop.



(Top) Taranaki Lizard Group (Right) Searching for goldstripes (Bottom) Juv. Wellington Green Gecko

The Taranaki Lizard Group held their regular meeting out at the Reserve in January and had a great day out checking out the captive species here and talking a walk.

Volunteer Freda has also named the two youngest geckos—the Wellington Greens—Joy and Delight, named after how she feels when here at the reserve. Thank you for all your care Freda, you are a valued member of our Rotokare community.

Rotokare Wish List

The items on this list will help staff and volunteers with their tasks. We welcome donations and contributions towards sourcing:

- Table cloths for events
- Dewalt 18V Linetrimmer (w/ battery)

Rotokare works hard to deliver significant conservation and community outcomes. If you'd like to help us, please lend us a hand by:

- **Contributing** wish list items
- **Donating** towards current projects
- **Volunteering** at our Sunday working bees (9am—12pm, with free lunch!), during the week, or as part of the Education team.
- **Becoming a "Friend of the Lake" (FOL)** with a \$30-\$50 annual donation

Follow us for more news, stories, and events:



Rotokare Scenic Reserve Trust



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Fundraising and Promotions



Rotokare Special Reserve Honey is now available as part of a gift pack of local products at the Collaboration. Buy online or in store on Devon Street, New Plymouth.



DONATE ONLINE

givealittle
POWERED BY perpetual guardian

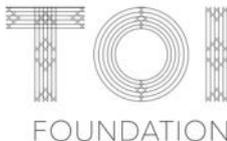
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Partnered for
Taranaki Kōhanga Kiwi at Rotokare
(TKKR) Project

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