

VOL. 1 ISSUE 7 · JULY 2024

# THE LAKE NEWS

Official Newsletter of Rotokare Volunteers

## View From The Top

BY ADRIAN CLEARY - GENERAL MANAGER

Kia ora koutou katoa,

I hope you all had a chance to enjoy Matariki celebrations this past weekend. The rise of Puanga (celebrated by many Iwi in the West) and Matariki signal a time for reflection, remembrance and celebration. For me it is also a time to practice gratitude. Modern times lend towards a fast past of life and sometimes we can forget to stop and smell the roses.

I'm grateful that we have such a special place like Rotokare in Taranaki, loved and treasured by so many. Rotokare is also lucky to have such a wonderful group of dedicated and passionate volunteers that has made it the place it is today. I'm extremely grateful for all of you.

Take care out there.

Adrian



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## Last month at a glance

Mice, Mice and more Mice. Well that's how things started last month and its continued right through June. Everybody has been busy throughout the month checking traps and tracking cards for the elusive pests.

The second tracking card run indicated we had been successful in clearing the the top areas of West and Menzie blocks but still had a problem in the Public area and up into the lower end of Crawshaw and O'Connors blocks. This is still a work in progress.

Again corporate working bees have been a huge help with tasks around the reserve. Crews from Monkeytoe helped on two occasions this month.

The new entry gate controllers continue to give problems. Hopefully the contractors can kick these gremlins to touch quickly to allow staff some piece of mind.

The first round of the annual kiwi call counts have been completed. The call rate was a little down on last year with 24 pairs being identified. Another round will be held in July.

Trapping is soon to start in Rannoch's Bush, the new corridor area connecting Rotokare to the Totara Block. This is hoped to provide an area of safe passage for bird life to move between the two predator free areas.

Finally congratulations to the Trustees for the recognition of their effort in driving the Rotokare Scenic Reserve forward with the award they received at the New Plymouth Volunteer Awards.



## Test Your Knowledge

1. Approximately how many hours do volunteers contribute to Rotokare in a year?  
a. 3600   b. 7200   c. 12400
2. Which Fiordland sound is also known as Patea?  
a. Doubtful Sound   b. George Sound   c. Dusky Sound
3. What tree species is regarded as a pest in the Rotokare Reserve and has been under constant control for many years?  
a. Poplar   b. Pine   c. Willow

**"Take your victories, whatever they may be, cherish them, use them, but don't settle for them."**

Mia Hamm







## Volunteer News

I think most would agree, we have seen enough mouse prints on tracking cards for this year.

It was extremely pleasing to see the response to the call for assistance with the extra tracking card run conducted during the month. It was the quickest cards out that anyone could remember. Two days, great effort everyone.

Attracting and retaining volunteers is always challenging especially when many organisations are competing for helpers from the same pool. It is pleasing when new initiatives are proposed and instigated by current volunteers to try and overcome this problem. Andrea Shepherd has developed flyers which she has distributed through South Taranaki schools and businesses. I'm certain this will have a positive response.

Volunteer Week was celebrated at Rotokare with a much appreciated BBQ lunch for our volunteers hosted by the Trustees. It was just a pity more were not able to take advantage of the hospitality.

One of Rotokare's long time volunteers, Alan Rogers recently took his volunteering to another level. As part of a Habitat for Humanity team he traveled to Nepal and assisted with the construction of new houses. He also had the opportunity to spend some time taking in the scenery while tramping some of the local trails.

## Volunteer of the Month

### Kevin Orr

I live just outside Hawera and I retired from the energy industry about eighteen months ago. The last twenty years or so of my career had largely been Control Room based and relatively sedentary. I soon realised that if that sort of thing continued my retirement was probably not likely to be long or fruitful.

I was perusing the Daily News website one day and came across an article about Rotokare and the shortage of new and younger volunteers. While I have an affinity with Rotokare going back to camping there in teenage days I certainly didn't meet the criteria for a younger volunteer. But I started to think that if there was maybe something I could offer, the benefit could be mutual. So after the exchange of a couple of emails and an induction last August I started turning up each week. It's truly one of the best things I've ever done and I love the place. I like the friendly, patient and helpful people, and the challenge of learning all the new things. I like the satisfaction of contributing to something worthwhile and feeling appreciated for doing it, and I (and my doctor) like the exercise.

I'm hooked, and if things go to plan I'll be about for a while, so I'm sure we'll catch up sometime.

I nominate Guy Oakley for our next Volunteer of the Month.



# Looking Ahead

Sunday July 21st - 9.00am

July Working Bee - High Risk Tracking Card Run - Cards Out.

Sunday July 28th - 9.00am

July Working Bee - High Risk Tracking Card Run - Cards In.

Sunday August 25th - 9.00am

August Working Bee - Fence maintenance.

Sunday September 22nd - 9.00am

September Working Bee - Hihi Pre-Breeding Survey.



## Task List

- Rodent response trap checking in Public area, and lower areas of Crawshaw and O'Connors blocks.
- Regular assistance with trap checks around the middle of each month when DOC traps get serviced and rebaited.
- Help with weekly fence checks and trap rebaiting.
- Bush classroom cleanup.
- Weed control - Mexican Daisy, Blackberry and Selaginella. See Fiona for details.
- Vegetation trimming along access card lines.
- Regular trimming of grass around bollards and posts in the public area.
- Regular weeding and tidying of office gardens, courtyard and Bush Classroom.

Assistance with these tasks would be appreciated.

If you are able to help please check with Fiona or Kane for further details. [fiona@rotokare.org.nz](mailto:fiona@rotokare.org.nz) or [kane@rotokare.org.nz](mailto:kane@rotokare.org.nz)

## Knowledge Answers

1. (b) 7200 2. (a) Doubtful Sound 3. (c) Willow

## Acknowledgements

Jenny Kerrisk for photos

ROKARE SCENIC RESERVE TRUST  
365 SANGSTER ROAD  
PO BOX 33  
ELTHAM

06 764 8500

[www.rotokare.org.nz](http://www.rotokare.org.nz)  
[contact@rotokare.org.nz](mailto:contact@rotokare.org.nz)  
[volunteers@rotokare.org.nz](mailto:volunteers@rotokare.org.nz)

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