

VOL. 1 ISSUE 11 - NOVEMBER 2024

THE LAKE NEWS

Official Newsletter of Rotokare Volunteers

View From The Top

BY ADRIAN CLEARY - GENERAL MANAGER

Kia ora e te whānau,

I hope everyone managed to find some downtime this past long weekend...

It's been another busy, but exciting period here at the reserve. We've had all the rain, we've had a mass of corporate working bees and of course we've had the release of three striped skinks which now call Rotokare home.

We had an incredible morning on the 16th connecting with the various groups involved in this translocation including Ngāti Tama who we now have a profound connection with. Many people were key to making this a reality with conversations beginning in 2018! I want to thank staff and volunteers for their help in preparing for these new arrivals. Thank you.

I was also lucky enough to attend the NZ Geographic Photographer of the Year awards in Britomart over labour weekend where Lance the Ptawakawaka was given a special mention. James Frankham (NZ Geo Publisher) chatted to Paul Gibson about the bird and how he got the shot. Of course, Rotokare was mentioned which was such a great moment. There are some superb images in the finals. Absolutely worth a look...

Lastly, I wanted to express my gratitude to all our volunteers who give so much to our beautiful reserve. You play such a vital role in our successes, so thank you all.

Go well.
Adrian

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Last month at a glance

We upped the number of species at Rotokare by one this month! We released three striped skinks into the sanctuary. This is the first of hopefully many striped skink releases as we aim to build a population here at Rotokare. There is a small chance that striped skinks are inside the fence, however no formal lizard survey has found any trace of these arboreal skinks. These skinks have been relocated from the mount messenger bypass project. They are fairly prone to predation by mice so having a mouse free zone is important for these little Tonga.

Kane and his crew have been busy laying new metal on the ridge track walkway. There have been a number of volunteers and corporate working bees putting in the hard yards. A massive thank you to all involved. Mark from Midwest helicopters hauled bags of metal up to the top of the track to get this project started!

We are over halfway in our fence screws! In a massive effort we have installed thousands of tec screws in the fence in an attempt to strengthen the predator proof fencing. Just the north section left to do now with the end in sight.

Our full sanctuary tracking card run is underway. With the cards being put out as this goes to print. They will start to come back in this Sunday the 27th of October. We are still needing some hands with this so if you can spare some time to walk a line, we would love to have you!

ANZCO who has been sending out a number of corporate volunteer groups to help us with various tasks around the reserve. They are finishing up with us in the coming weeks.

We have a renovated lizard cage thanks to Wietze and Ray. The double cage got a well needed makeover replacing the mesh, so we get no escapees. We also added an opening top to allow these little guys to get much needed UV rays.

Test Your Rotokare Knowledge

1. Which of these is not a management tool used to assist Rotokares Hihi?
 - a. Nesting boxes
 - b. Supplementary feeding
 - c. Ready made nests
2. Which of the following are allowed inside the reserve?
 - a. Pet cats confined in camper vans
 - b. Trained conservation dogs
 - c. Personal support dogs
3. Which of these is not a feature of Lake Rotokare?
 - a. Waterski jump
 - b. Floating viewing pontoon
 - c. Boat ramp

“Progress is impossible without change, and those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything.”

George Bernard Shaw





Volunteer News

We have had a full sanctuary tracking card run currently ongoing, cards are going out, and will start to come in Sunday the 27th, contact Fiona if you would like to give us a hand to help out.

The information center workshop is being held this month. This will have a cooked breakfast and then the workshop afterwards. All are invited to come along and give input to what you would like to see in the new information center. See below for more detail.

The first hihi eggs of the season have been spotted! Fiona has spotted two clutches in nests

If you feel like a changeup, feel free to contact Cassie about being an education volunteer! Our amazing crew needs a few more hands to cover some of the school coming through. Days with the education team usually consist of a walk along barrier free and imparting your knowledge on to the younger generations.

Volunteer of the Month

Jan Fleming

I have been visiting Rotokare since the late 1970s with my family, waterskiing, camping and walking. Long before it was a sanctuary, I remember being kept awake with possums rattling our pots and pans. At a MEAC club night a few years ago Andrea Shepherd was appealing for volunteers for an upcoming tracking card run. I said I felt I wasn't up to scrambling up trap lines, and she suggested I could learn to check tunnel cards so that was my beginning as a Rotokare Volunteer.

Some time later I was talking with Alan Rogers and told him I was an occasional volunteer but should probably be doing more, and he said "I've got just the job for you" and introduced me to feeding Hihi. I've been enjoying this task for probably 3 years now, mostly with my friend Lois Sundy, but have also taken my granddaughter and a great granddaughter to assist. And next week my daughter who will be visiting from the UK will assist.

Last year Penelope asked for volunteers for Education programmes and I thought "I can do that", and since I began this new task have enjoyed interaction with the public, especially school groups, and have learnt so much from Penelope, now Cassie, and the other volunteers.

Volunteering has been so rewarding, I am proud to be part of the Rotokare family.

I nominate Wietze Hoogeveen as the next volunteer of the month.



Looking Ahead

Sunday October 27th- 9:00am
Full Sanctuary Tracking card run.

November working bee TBC

Sunday December 1st
Lake Rotokare opened to powerboats for the summer.

Monday December 11th 8:00am
New Visitor Center Workshop. RSVP to Tricia



Task List

- Spray Barrier free track edges.
- Hihi feeder one (1) sign needs installing.
- Tracking cards in.
- 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.
- Weed control - Mexican Daisy and Selaginella. See Fiona for details.
- Line clearing of sanctuary access lines.

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 or kane@rotokare.org.nz

Knowledge Answers

1. (c) Ready made nests 2. (b) Trained conservation dogs 3. (a) Waterski Jump

ROKARE SCENIC RESERVE TRUST
365 SANGSTER ROAD
PO BOX 33
ELTHAM

06 764 8500

www.rotokare.org.nz
contact@rotokare.org.nz
volunteers@rotokare.org.nz

www.facebook.com/rotokare
www.facebook.com/rotokarevolunteers



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