

VOL. 1 ISSUE 9 · SEPTEMBER 2024

THE LAKE NEWS

Official Newsletter of Rotokare Volunteers

View From The Top

BY ADRIAN CLEARY - GENERAL MANAGER

Kia ora koutou,

A huge thanks to our volunteers who haven't been staying dry in the last couple of weeks. Our essential tasks don't disappear with the weather – Huge respect to the volunteer crew who show up regardless.

I also want to express my massive thanks, along with our Trustees, for the mouse response efforts. We are one of the more high-risk sanctuaries in Aotearoa NZ and yet most of year we remain mouse free. What a testament to you all. Incredible. Thankyou.

A trip to Dunedin's beautiful Orokonui Ecosanctuary for the Sanctuaries of NZ conference was a recent highlight. Three days of amazing people, stories, insights and hospitality from those that are kaitiaki of our (mostly fenced) sanctuaries, was well worth the trip. I highly recommend a visit for those that haven't been. Two words... Otago Skinks!

You also would have seen that ground has been broken for our new info/education/visitor centre. This has been a while coming and it's great to see it underway. We are still seeking ideas and feedback, so please don't hesitate...

Conservation Week is also upon us. This is another opportunity to celebrate the mahi that you do and all that you've achieved.

Go well.
Adrian

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Last month at a glance

Kiwi breeding season is underway around the province but it appears ours are a little slow off the mark with none of our monitored males incubating eggs yet.

Finally most of the extra mouse traps that had been deployed throughout the sanctuary over the past few months are being brought back in. There is growing confidence that we have got on top of this mouse response. There will be another full sanctuary tracking card run in October and it is hoped this confirms it.

The first sign of activity on the site for the new information centre has occurred, with the Trust still looking for fit-out ideas. If you have any thoughts on what and how things could be displayed please contact Adrian. It is proposed that a workshop be held in the near future to facilitate ideas. Keep an eye out for a date on this.

The upgrade of the main entry gates is almost complete. There are still some minor gremlins in the electronics which hopefully will be sorted soon. The final parts of the upgrade are the installation of new flood lights and security cameras.

The Taranaki Regional Council have provided Rotokare with a number of the relatively new Fbomb predator traps to trial. The Fbomb trap, designed and built in Inglewood, is lightweight, high powered and very safe to use. The trap is designed specifically for mustelids and rats. Its light weight means it easier deployed than the standard DOC traps.

The Fbombs supplied to Rotokare are being fitted with electronic monitoring sensors and then deployed in the Halo project.

Further to our story last month about 'Lance The Bird'. Back in June Jenny Kerrisk and Jenny Oakley introduced Paul Gibson to Lance The Bird. Paul is a renowned bird photographer and author of numerous bird books. Paul was lucky enough to get some amazing shots, one of which he entered into the New Zealand Geographic Photograph competition has been selected as a finalist. Good luck Paul.

Test Your Rotokare Knowledge

1. When are Rotokare night tours offered?
 - a. All year around
 - b. On demand
 - c. July to September
2. Who or what is Peppa?
 - a. A volunteer
 - b. A Kiwi
 - c. A Lizard
3. What was the Education Centre building used for prior to being moved to Rotokare?
 - a. Community hall
 - b. School classroom
 - c. Haybarn

"If you cannot do great things, do small things in a great way."

Napoleon Hill



Volunteer News

Welcome aboard to our new volunteers. It is great to have you join our team.

Zuzka Erdossyova

Isabel Moss

Shirley Moss

Mike Le Pine

Cayla Moss

Raynard Moss

Jade Yelseth

A refresher session on fence check protocols is planned for the near future. This is to ensure all those involved in checking the predator fence are doing so to a consistent high standard. Those volunteers who do fence checks will be notified when a date and time is finalised. If anyone else wishes to attend please contact Kane.

Children are always welcome to accompany their parents while participating in sanctuary activities, but the parents must remember that they are responsible for their child's supervision and safety. Don't expect other volunteers to act as baby sitters.

There are a number of corporate working bees planned for this next month and Kane would like some assistance from our volunteer team to help organise and guide these groups. Give Kane a call.

Rotokare Educator, Cassie is organising a Rotokare display at the Taranaki Conservation Week Expo in Stratford on Wednesday 4th Sept and would like someone to help set up and man the display. If you are interested please contact Cassie urgently.



Volunteer of the Month

Jenny Oakley

Currently I feel like a "Claytons volunteer". Back in March during the Kiwi Dog Catching Week I slipped and hit my forehead sustaining a concussion/whiplash injury. (Yes, I had mud crampons on my boots). The specialists say it will take up to 12 months to get back to 'almost normal'.

This is a bit unusual, but I'd like to use this opportunity to acknowledge how wonderful our health system has been. Not something you often hear. I was referred to the Taranaki Concussion Clinic on hospital admission and the support from them has been incredible. This involved many assessments, initially weekly physiotherapy and supportive phone calls to address the many issues that arise from a concussion. Six months down the track I'm much improved although I still have to rest twice a day. It's a long slow process. Each time you try to do too much there seems to be a 'set-back' or a couple of rough days. Friends and family have been very supportive. Guy has spent a lot of time in the kitchen!

Hopefully in a few months I will be useful again and am very keen to get back into helping with fence checks, trapline checks, lizard monitoring, bird call surveys and the kiwi work - just some of the wonderful opportunities I've had as a volunteer at Rotokare.

Would John Cooper tell us about himself next please?



Looking Ahead

September 2nd to 8th - Conservation Week

Wednesday September 4th - 2.00-5.00pm

Taranaki Conservation Week Expo
Stratford War Memorial Hall

Sunday September 22nd - 9.00am

Working Bee - Hihi Pre-Breeding Survey.

Sunday October 13th - 9.00am

Full Sanctuary Tracking Card Run - Cards out

Sunday October 20th - 9.00am

Full Sanctuary Tracking Card Run - Cards in



Task List

- Lizard monitoring devices maintenance check.
- Assisting in various aspects of the Hihi program.
- 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, Blackberry and Selaginella. See Fiona for details.
- Regular weeding and tidying of office gardens, courtyard and Bush Classroom.
- Prepare the white fences along the road ready for painting.

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) July to September 2. (c) Lizard 3. (b) School classroom

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