

THE ISAAC CONSERVATION AND WILDLIFE TRUST

A study in conservation



ICWT NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 10

SUMMER

JANUARY 2017



Otukaikino Loop Track

The **Otukaikino River** is a stunning multi-branched spring fed river feeding into the Waimakariri River. The ICWT is dedicated to improving the Otukaikino River's ecosystem and has committed to restoring a section of the river. To date the ICWT has set aside land on its eastern boundary, fenced off waterways from stock, extensively cleared weeds, and planted over 45,000 eco-sourced natives, in association with the Christchurch City Council, Fish & Game, ECan, and Department of Corrections. Amongst the corridor of native plants that now line the river, walkways for the public have been developed. **The Isaac Conservation Park Walkway** can be accessed via the newly installed Otukaikino River bridge, that links in with the public walkway. The loop track will be opened next week, and is stage one, to be followed by the **Isaac Farm Walk**, opening next year.



ICWT News

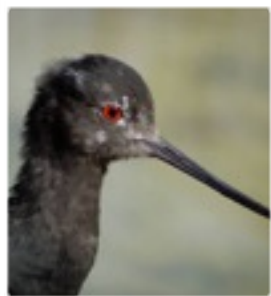


Scholarships



Heritage Village

Wildlife Division / Breeding Season



Black stilt: We had 3 pairs breeding this season. The third pair bred for the first time in two years, after they were transferred to a new aviary. We assisted the DOC Twizel facility with their chick overflow, and hand reared four clutches of 6 chicks. Another 25 juveniles were then transferred to the Trust on 2 January. We are currently holding 59 black stilts in total.

New Zealand shore plover: We had 4 pairs breeding this season. One was a surprise chick sighted on camera in an aviary in late December. The pair are not a year old yet and had only loosely paired late in

October. A few infertile eggs occurred this season, particularly from one pair. However we still have 18 chicks so far. We had an outbreak of Salmonella in one of the brooder rooms, which held back releases, but are overcoming this with changed brooder rooms and full quarantine. Wildbase/Massey University assisted with 3 chicks, especially since one had a fractured leg which was fixed. These were recently released at Motutapu Island. We hope to transfer another 6, with the remaining juveniles to be released at Waikawa/Portland Island. One juvenile will be retained for breeding.

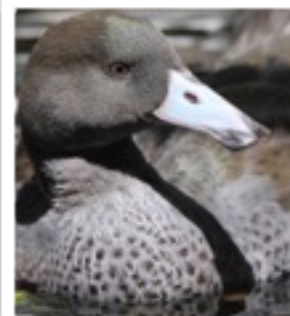


Orange-fronted parakeet: 3 pairs are currently breeding. Gabby has hatched more chicks, hopefully these survive (after her foster clutch did not). Polly is still laying infertile eggs, and we are hoping we will receive another wild clutch that she can foster. Tom and Minie had 8 chicks in their first clutch and their second clutch of 9 chicks is starting to fledge now – the largest clutch we have ever had.

Blue duck: This season is the first time one of our North Island blue duck pairs has produced four clutches, producing 15 ducklings for release. The second breeding pair produced two clutches, with only

3 ducklings surviving. We believe this is due to the birds being obese (300g above normal weight on arrival to the ICWT), resulting in dead embryos. The young newly formed South Island blue duck pair did not breed this season. These may need to be older, as they are certainly differ from North Island blue duck in behaviour. One South Island pair will be transferred to Orana Wildlife Park, as we are running low on aviary space. Another waterfowl aviary is due to be constructed soon. We hatched 18 South Island blue duck ducklings that were collected as wild eggs by DOC.

We recently released 5 South Island blue duck from the last breeding season in the Hokitika area. We will once again retain juveniles for flock mating.



Brown teal: 5 breeding pairs are currently on their second clutches. We are presently holding close to 100 teal on site, with 25 transferred to Motutapu Island on 24 January, and 40 to the Arthur Valley in Milford on 23 February. The remaining teal will be released in March.

ICWT News



After the Kaikoura earthquakes the ICWT engaged **Richards Engineering** to inspect commercial buildings on site to ascertain if any damage was incurred. Some minor repairs were required.

The ICWT's **dairy farm lease tender** has closed. Perry and Jackie McConachie have accepted a 5 + 5 year lease commencing on 1 June. We are about to tender for the newly amalgamated sheep farm. This new farm lease will commence on 1 July.

The ICWT took part in the annual **Christchurch Santa Parade** on 4 December,

with Isaac truck #3 being part of the procession.

The **Cathedral Choristers** were on site on 17 October, for a full day of singing coaching in the Lake House.

New security cameras and a cantilevered sliding gate were installed prior to Christmas at the entrance to Isaac Construction Ltd offices.

The ICWT **installed wildlife cameras in aviaries** to provide behavioural footage of birds. This is especially useful for cryptic and easily disturbed species such as critically endangered NZ shore plover.



The **Take A Kid Fishing** event was successfully held at Christchurch's Groynes Fishing grounds in October, with excellent attendance. The ICWT is a major sponsor of this annual event, which is managed by the Kids Fishing Charitable Trust.

At the **Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board Awards** in Christchurch. The Arthurs Pass Wildlife Trust won the 2016 Biodiversity Award category. This award was sponsored by the ICWT, with the Banks Peninsula Restoration Trust and the Avon Otakaro Mahinga Kai project both being runner-ups.



An **abandoned little owl** currently shares the tea room with the Landscape Division. Builders Assistant Bill Waterman has been raising the owl since he was found as a small chick and management look forward to him fledging!

The **Isaac Construction Ltd summer newsletter** will shortly be available, and is posted on their website: www.isaac.co.nz

Scholarships

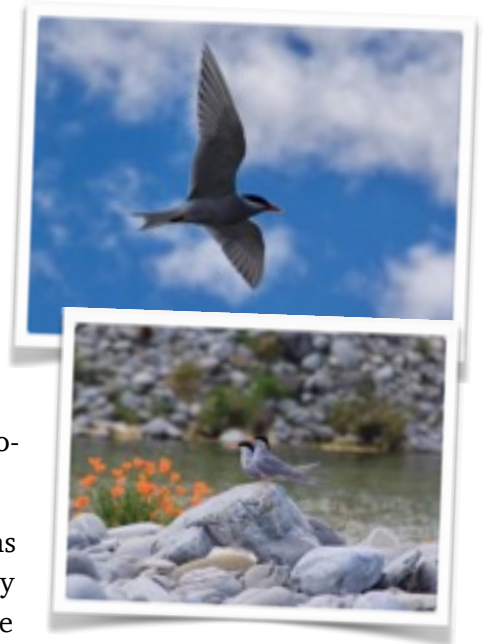
Courtney Hamblin holds the current **Lady Diana Isaac Scholarship in Nature Conservation** at Lincoln University, and intends to finalise her M.Sc. thesis on the endangered black-fronted tern in March 2017. Courtney completed her field work at Canterbury river sites in late December. Data analysis has begun and hopefully there will be some promising outcomes.

Claire McCorkindale has been awarded the Lady Diana Isaac Scholarship from March 2017, and will be commencing a M.Sc. in agro-ecology.

The Lady Diana Isaac Scholarship in Nature Conservation was established in 2000 by Lady Isaac. This scholarship is now governed by the ICWT and continues Lady Isaac's legacy of supporting postgraduate study in conservation and environmental areas at Lincoln University.

The **Sir Neil Isaac Scholarship in Environmental Science** supports M.Sc. or PhD environmental research at University of Canterbury. The scholarship was established in 2014 by the ICWT in memory of Sir Neil Isaac (1915-1987), who had a lifelong enthusiasm for enhancing relationships between people and the environment. It replaces the Sir Neil Isaac Scholarship in Geography/Environmental Science, which was established in 1987. The current Sir Neil Isaac scholar is **Sophie Hale**.

In addition, ICWT has also funded University of Canterbury postgraduate student **Ilina Cubrinovska**, who is currently studying critically endangered NZ shore plover towards her PhD.



Maintenance Division

Insect proof aviaries are nearly complete and will be utilised for critically endangered NZ Shore plover chicks to prevent transmission of avian pox by mosquitos.

Eel and rat proof grates are now easier to maintain after major modifications in the wetland aviaries.

Internal dividing curtains have been installed within both black stilt aviaries to increase holding capacity of juveniles.

Repairs and maintenance at the **Isaac laboratory** include roof repairs and gutter replacement, plus seismic strengthening to follow.

The Green Shed water stand platform has been rebuilt to improve stability and safety, replacement guttering has also been installed.

The kitchen refit has been completed at the **374 McLean's Island Road** rental, including rimu joinery, new flooring and painting.

Additional reinforcing has been provided to **workshop buildings** and the Holcim building.

The interior of **Clifton Homestead** is being painted and papered as part of ongoing earthquake repairs.

The roof and exterior walls of the **Isaac Construction Ltd office** have recently been repainted.

Landscape Division

A small paddock near an Isaac's paint shop contains a pond with critically endangered Canterbury mudfish. This area has recently been planted with natives to form a buffer from the workshop.

The Trust had four staff from Isaac Construction Ltd assist the Landscape Division with weeding and weed-eating over the Christmas period. The stinging nettles on the stop bank proved to be difficult to remove. The team also cut weeds and grass along quarry roadsides to mitigate fire risks.

The rain through spring and Christmas break was welcomed by our Landscape team, as it reduced the need for irrigation and reduced the risk of fire.

Facebook



Follow the ICWT's work via Facebook.

We keep followers up to date with conservation efforts and inspire people to make a difference.

Our Facebook page has over 12,000 likes and an audience of over 300,000 people!



Find the Facebook link here:
www.isaacconservation.org



Heritage Village



This cottage is one of two historic houses built side by side in Christchurch's **Peacock Street** in 1905, two years before New Zealand became a dominion within the British Empire. Symbols of nationhood emerged such as the new flag – still in use today.

Peacock Street originally housed the servants who worked in the large houses along Bealey Avenue in Christchurch. In 1905 urban development continued to grow, with the emergence of vocations to provide self-sustaining industry for basic household items. This urban development saw the proliferation of schools, churches and community associations, and Christchurch increased in size to become a small city.

This cottage was salvaged and relocated to the ICWT's **Heritage Village**. It is presently decorated in the art deco style which emerged during the 1930's.

Who Are We?

ICWT Administration

Rob Clarke – Executive Trustee (Chair)
 Alister McDonald – Trustee
 William (Bill) Luff – Trustee
 Bruce Rule – Operations Manager
 Catherine Ott – Administration Manager
 Michelle Foster - Accountant

Wildlife Division

Anne Richardson – Wildlife Manager
 Sabrina Luecht – Project Administrator
 Josh Foster – Wildlife Keeper
 Emma Cournane - Wildlife Keeper
 Leigh Percasky– Wildlife Keeper
 Leonie Heyder – Wildlife Keeper
 Nicki Wells – Wildlife Keeper
 Kathy Hackett - Wildlife Keeper
 Hannah Murdoch - Wildlife Keeper

Landscape Division

Ian Gebbie - Landscaper
 George Maipi - Landscaper
 Rachel Brewer – Gardener/Caretaker
 Ian Archer - Gardener

Maintenance Division

Hamish Milne – Builder
 Peter Jones – Painter/Handyman
 Bill Waterman - Builders Assistant



Meet The Editor

Sabrina Luecht began working for the ICWT in 2013 as a Senior Wildlife Keeper. Since then she has been appointed as Project Administrator. Sabrina's forte is endangered species conservation, communications, education and media.

The Isaac Conservation and Wildlife Trust

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