

THE ISAAC CONSERVATION AND WILDLIFE TRUST

A study in conservation



Newsletter

Issue 13

Spring 2017



Spring at Peacock Springs

Late winter brought extremely wet weather which has been very beneficial for the ICWT **native planting programme**.

We have enjoyed unprecedented growth on plants in the Isaac Conservation Park, including the natives planted by the BNZ and ANZ adjacent to Lake Diana. We are enjoying seeing blossoms such as those of the kowhai, attracting bird and insect life during spring.

Due to plant maturity we have now removed many of the combi-guards and with a recent reapplication of mulch, will reduce maintenance weed spraying.

With 50,000 natives now planted along the **Otukaikino River**, we are delighted that 4-5 year old plants have begun to seed and self-perpetuate.

The Otukaikino River restoration project has been recognised as suitable habitat for the critically endangered **Olearia adenocarpa**, also known as the dry plains shrub daisy. This endemic *Olearia* species is failing to regenerate in the wild and there are now fewer than 700 adult plants remaining, ranking it among New Zealand's 50 most threatened plants. 45 individuals were recently planted along the riparian zone, and will assist in determining how best to reintroduce these plants back into the Canterbury environment.



**Wildlife
Division**



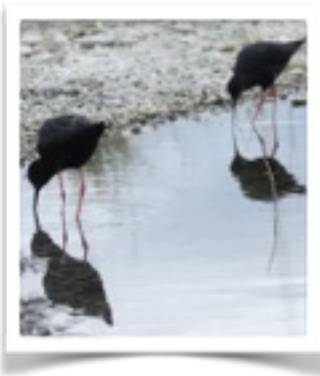
ICWT News



**Heritage
Village**

Wildlife Division

Black stilt: Two pairs are on their second clutches, while the third pair has not begun laying yet. IWCT will be receiving three groups of chicks in early November, to assist with the overload at the Twizel facility. With more pairs breeding in the wild now, an increased number of wild eggs are being collected, which is excellent but means rearing capacity is limited in Twizel, until a new brooder room is constructed. ICWT will move the non-breeding pair and once again divide aviaries to create more juvenile holding space.



New Zealand shore plover: Two shore plover pairs are currently breeding, their first clutches have hatched and are being hand reared. Pairs have now laid their second clutches. One pair were moved to another aviary after last breeding season, due to fighting, and have not bred since. The male from the fourth pair injured his eye during winter causing blindness in it, thus we are unsure whether the pair will lay this season. ICWT is presently trying to flock mate two males and three females, though they are not thinking of pairing up at this point in time.

have just begun incubating their first clutch. We have created two new pairs, however these have not bred yet. The Department of Conservation is putting extensive efforts into the recovery programme, though it could now be too late, with the species on the brink. There are now only two known pairs in the Poulter valley, and none elsewhere. This will drastically reduce genetics for the captive breeding population. ICWT is hoping to release 20 juveniles prior to Christmas.



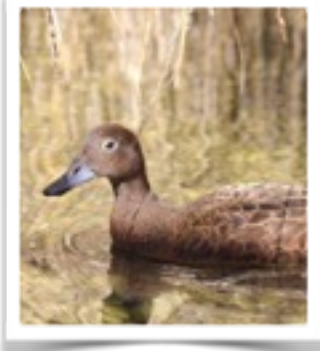
Blue duck: Six ducklings have recently hatched from a North Island pair, while the second North Island pair has only produced one fertile egg out of six. The young South Island pair laid five eggs, but three were infertile and one died early in incubation, with only one duckling hatching. We received two wild clutches from the Department of Conservation in Motueka, for rearing and flock mating to create captive breeding pairs. However we require more clutches from that area, so that the pairs are not genetically the same. We are also rearing eggs and ducklings from other captive institutions.



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Brown teal: 28 brown teal ducklings have hatched this season so far, with pairs beginning their second clutches. ICWT received two orphans from Great Barrier Island, which will be flock mated to create new pairs, as a number of pairs around New Zealand need retiring from the captive breeding programme.



Tuatara: As a tuatara breeding ban remains in place and there are no suitable release sites, ICWT is transferring its tuatara to other captive institutions. Several tuatara were transferred to the West Coast Wildlife Centre in Franz Josef recently. Big Boy and three females remain at ICWT until transfer to the new Wildbase facility in Palmerston North in March 2018, where they will be on public display for advocacy.

ICWT News

ICWT would like to welcome new full-time Wildlife Keeper **Sean Kavanagh**, who has worked at Taronga Zoo in Sydney and Natureland in Nelson.

Farewell to Wildlife Keepers **Emma Cournane** and **Nikki Wells**, we wish you well in the next chapter of your lives - welcoming another baby, and transitioning into a different career respectively.

ICWT also farewells wildlife biologist **Sabrina Luecht**, who was Senior Wildlife Keeper since 2013 and later the Wildlife Project Administrator. We wish Sabrina well with the Kaikoura Wildlife Rescue facility she has recently opened.

Wildlife Keeper Josh Foster presented a paper during **Conservation Week** on the critically endangered orange-fronted parakeet. The species is in dire straits with only two known pairs remaining in the wild. Christchurch Helicopters and former All Black captain Richie McCaw have partnered with the Department of Conservation to support translocations and increased awareness.

The annual **Take A Kid Fishing** event was held at the Groynes on 19 October, which ICWT is an ongoing supporter of, donating hundreds of salmon every year.

The old Isaac Construction Ltd Morris truck is again being readied to partake in the vintage machinery parade at the **Christchurch A & P Show** from 15-17 November.

ICWT assisted in the reprint of a book called '**Native By Design**' that showcases landscape design utilising native plants by twenty of New Zealand's top landscape architects and designers.

Congratulations to **Courtney Hamblin**, the Lady Diana Isaac Scholar at Lincoln University who recently graduated with an M.Sc. on the endangered black-fronted tern. **Claire McCorkindale** is the succeeding Lincoln University scholar, while University of Canterbury scholar **Sophie Hale** is half way through completing her M.Sc.

Maintenance & Landscape Division

The brick-sided **Peacock Street cottage** exterior has been re-painted, with attention also given to the wrought iron gate and fence.

ICWT builder Hamish and his right hand man Bill have been so busy with multiple **building projects** across the site, that we have engaged an three temporary builders to assist. Thank you to all staff involved.

The new **Isaac laboratory offices** and **transport amenity building** is now complete. Seismic strengthening of the existing laboratory is well underway, plus building has begun on a new Quarry office building.

'**Stonehenge**' is a new planting area that surrounds a pond holding Canterbury mudfish. We continue to increase the existing native plantings and have eel proofed the pond to aid this critically endangered mudfish species.

Expanding the **native plantings** adjacent to the kaka aviary has seen these plantings double in size and continues the beautification of the Isaac Conservation Park. We have mulched native plantings to prepare for the upcoming summer months, to reduce water usage and wastage through evaporation.



Heritage Village



The **Selwyn Street cottage** was donated to ICWT in very poor condition, after it was due to be demolished to make way for new development.

Ship's ballast was used for the house piles in its original location, with the cottage merely sitting on top of piles of stones and not secured down in any way.

Pat and Pru Cotter enjoyed a friendship with Lady Isaac and whilst they were visiting the Heritage Village one day, Pat reminisced how in his childhood, the doctor's consulting room would be at the front of the house, while the family resided at the rear. This sparked the idea to set up Selwyn Street as a permanent display cottage.

The Cotter Medical History Trust now houses part of its extensive collection within the cottage. Originally constituted by retired surgeon Pat Cotter, and maintained with the archival support of retired colleagues, the Cotter Medical History Trust mandate is to collect, preserve and display artefacts of a medical nature.

A major file of biographical notes, recording the achievements of doctors, dentists, technical, managerial, administrative and nursing staff who have been employed in the health professions of Canterbury, is augmented with a museum of medical implements, equipment, photographs, documents, memorabilia, and books relating to all aspects of health care within New Zealand – the largest collection in the country and recognised to be of national significance.

Today the fully restored cottage is one of the Heritage Village's prime examples in preserving a piece of New Zealand history.

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
Josh Foster – Wildlife Keeper
Leigh Percasky – Wildlife Keeper
Leonie Heyder – Wildlife Keeper
Hannah Murdoch - Wildlife Keeper
Sean Kavanagh - 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

The Isaac Conservation and Wildlife Trust

PO Box 20-440, Bishopdale, Christchurch 8543

Phone: 03 359 8962

Email: enquiries@isaacconservation.org.nz

Website: www.isaacconservation.org.nz

