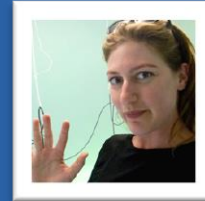




ICWT Newsletter

Issue 5 – Winter 2015



Editor: Sabrina Luecht

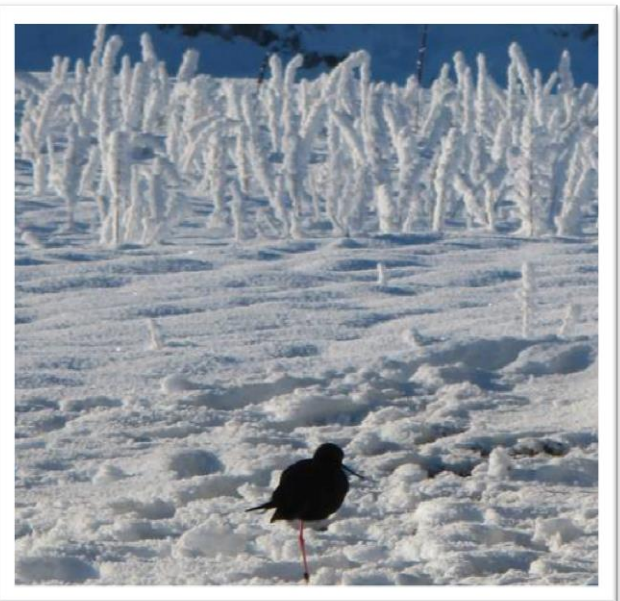


Black stilt

Wildlife Division

A bumper breeding season (with 170 chicks hatched) means that aviaries were filled to the brim with **black stilt/kaki** chicks this winter, at the Trust and at the Twizel facility. Mid-August saw the release of 49 juveniles from the Trust, near Lake Tekapo. There was much snow, but these birds are tough and don't mind. Supplementary feeding is underway for a total of 6 weeks, to give these birds the best chance to adapt to life outside of an aviary. 50 young sub-adults and 2 adults that were surplus to the breeding programme were released in the Tasman Valley. Captive breeding pairs have recently begun nest construction, meaning the process all starts again soon!

New Zealand shore plover



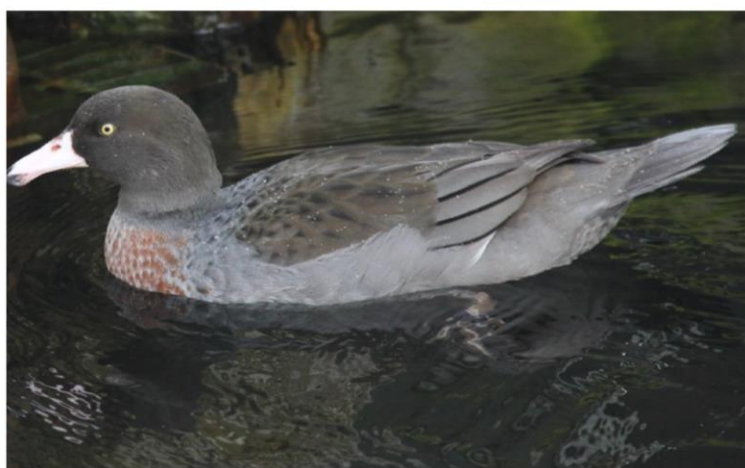
The Trust received 3 young **New Zealand shore plover/tuturuatu** from our friends at Pukaha Mount Bruce Wildlife Centre this winter, to utilize for flock mating. The 3 established pairs should be beginning egg laying from early September onwards. We are still hoping to gain two new pairs from current flock mating efforts. The Recovery Group meeting was held at the Trust at the end of August. It was decided to trial a new approach for releases, in order to minimize dispersal to the mainland. This will involve transferring all chicks from the brooder rooms at 30 days old, directly to island holding aviaries (rather than holding chicks in Trust aviaries until release).

The Trust currently holds 3 **orange-fronted parakeets/kakariki karaka** breeding pairs, and continues to be in the process of flock mating young birds to create new pairs. A red-crowned parakeet pair will also be used to foster wild collected eggs. The Department of Conservation (DoC) recently undertook a monitoring trip to Maud Island, where past orange-fronted parakeet translocations were not overly successful, due to mites, avian predators and resource shortages. The Trust looks forward to monitoring outcomes. The Recovery Group held its annual meeting at the Trust at the end of August, to discuss conservation strategies. The Trust is desperately hoping to gain 3-4 wild clutches from the DoC monitoring team this season, which are vital to increase pair numbers and genetic viability.

Orange-fronted parakeet



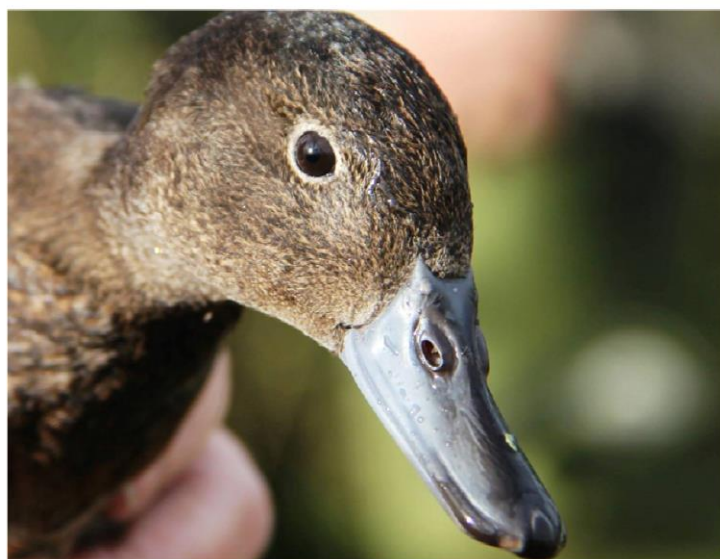
Blue duck



The 2 **North Island blue duck/whio** pairs began egg laying early, with their breeding season kicking off in late August. Their clutches will be transferred to incubators in the first week of September, with ducklings due to hatch in late September/early October. The Trust is hoping for a bumper breeding season in the wild, to enable the collection of as many **South Island whio** eggs as possible via the Department of Conservation (DoC) Whio Nest Egg (WHIONE) Programme. We are hoping this year's El Nino event will not result in significant flood events hampering wild breeding efforts. Last season was the highest whio output on record, with the Trust contributing the highest numbers for release. Hopefully we can beat that record this year!

Brown teal

The Trust's **brown teal/pateke** pairs breed throughout the year. 7 pairs are currently incubating and all will hatch in September. The Trust has sent 2 breeding pairs to Pukaha Mount Bruce National Wildlife Centre, who have just joined the captive breeding programme again. Another of our pairs (and their eggs) will be transferred to Willowbank Wildlife Reserve, to replace 1 of their old pairs. Willowbank will artificially incubate the eggs and hand rear the ducklings. 16 juveniles will be released mid-September at Young Nicks Head, a new site which received its first translocation in autumn. 3 older breeding pairs will be transferred to Rotoroa Island, a wildlife reserve managed by Auckland Zoo. Most of the brown teal around the country are all incubating eggs, and the Trust will be expecting a large number of juveniles arriving prior to Christmas for conditioning before their release into the wild. An early release may be needed!



Otukaikino River – Site Restoration

The Trust owns a large proportion of land adjoining the stunning **Otukaikino River (South Branch of the Waimakariri River)**, with parts of the site being managed by the Christchurch City Council (CCC) under a greater restoration programme - involving the staged removal of weeds (e.g. blackberry, gorse and willows), fencing and native plantings.

The river has now been completely fenced off from stock, with a generous corridor of land provided to maximise the riparian planting zone. Vehicle access and walkways have been formed along a 5 km stretch, extending between Lake Roto Kohatu and Clearwater Resort. To date 20,000 (out of 37,000) natives have been planted on the Trust's section of land, in a collaborative effort with the CCC (managed by Arthur Adcock) and the Department of Corrections.

Planting Concept and Methodology

The riparian plantings are all endemic to Canterbury and are situated in the ribbon corridor following the river. Some stands of kanuka have been planted on the outer edge, to emulate the natural occurrence of kanuka and manuka surrounding the forest fringe, as a "nursery plant". In limited areas, it is hoped to plant some stands of taller trees. The land has been cleared for planting manually, utilising brush cutters, machetes and axes. The slash has been retained on site in piles, to utilise as shelter from the Canterbury winds. Ground preparation is minimal, with no fertiliser applied. Combi guards are used to mitigate against hares. Mulch is used when available, with fortnightly watering undertaken during summer. Spraying contractors are employed for weed maintenance until a native canopy has formed.

Water Quality

The Otukaikino River won the **2014 New Zealand River Award** for the most improved New Zealand river. Samples were taken over a ten year period to measure human-derived phosphorus levels, stemming from wastewater treatment plants, farm-shed discharges and fertilizer run-off. Phosphorus causes the growth of algal slimes, smothering freshwater habitat and degrading water quality. Water quality improvements in the river were driven by better sewage treatment and landowners undertaking riparian fencing and planting.

Public Access

The Isaac bridge spans the river and provides access to the west and north bank, providing a vital link from the existing walkways to the Waimakariri Reserve. Public foot access across the bridge and the north-west track extension will be granted once the track formation and plantings are completed to Coutts Island Road. It is hoped the work will be completed by 2020.



Snow Damage at Black Stilt/Kaki Aviaries in Twizel

The **Kaki Recovery Programme** was hit with terrible news on 18 June 2015, when heavy snow caused one of the Department of Conservation aviaries in Twizel to collapse. A second aviary sustained significant damage, which deemed it unsafe to enter. Out of 12 birds housed in the collapsed aviary, 3 were unaccounted for, 4 escaped and 5 were rescued and moved to a third aviary.

The Trust came to the rescue, offering aviary space and housing 11 juveniles until the planned September releases.

The escaped birds were fed daily in order to catch them again. Some but not all of the escapees were eventually caught, including an important 9 year old male.

Drop traps and tunnel nets were used to catch birds trapped in the damaged aviary – with all being caught over a week. The birds needed a lot of time to become comfortable entering the tunnel net, so each group was being fed in the tunnel net for several days until they were accustomed to it.

We thank the Kaki Recovery Programme team for all their hard work, working exceptionally long hours in extreme conditions (-8.5C, thick fog, hoar frost and snow).



OUT AND ABOUT

Sir Neil Memorial Garden; young film-maker Tōmairangi Harvey after her win; and the wetland.



The **2,000 natives** planted in autumn on Lake Diana's northern shore are flourishing. An additional 300 natives will be planted on the southern shore. Ground preparations are well underway.



In Brief

Young film-maker **Tōmairangi Harvey** has won an international award at the **Japan Wildlife Film Festival**, for her short film *Te Ao O Te Tuturuatu / The World Of The New Zealand Shore Plover*. The Trust contributed \$5,000 towards travel costs to Japan, to ensure Tōmairangi's attendance to the festival.

The **Lady Diana Isaac Scholarship in Nature Conservation** is presently being advertised by Lincoln University. This scholarship continues Lady Isaac's legacy of supporting postgraduate study and research in conservation and environmental science.

The Trust has donated \$5,000 to **Braided River Aid (Braid)** to assist in braided river management, with a core focus on protecting critically endangered birds.

The **Otukaikino River bridge** project is now complete, and over 20,000 natives have been planted, with many to go.

The **Sir Neil Memorial Garden** has received a significant tidy up. This rhododendron and dahlia garden provides a tranquil area overlooking both the bush and waterfowl aviaries.

The Trust has **fenced all waterways from stock on the sheep farm**, and installed stock troughs throughout, as part of an ongoing commitment to the environment.

Forest & Bird's annual **Bird Of The Year** competition has been confirmed for 5-25 October 2015. This always provides a great opportunity to raise awareness for some of New Zealand's most endangered or least known birds. Make sure you vote when the competition opens!

The Trust's **Facebook page** has hit a milestone of 3,700+ Likes and a post reach of 160,000+ people from all over the world. Thank you for tuning in!

FAST FACTS

ICWT Facebook



3,790 Likes

Find the link via our website:

www.isaacconservation.org.nz



Trust Staff

Trust Administration

Rob Clarke – Executive Trustee (Chairman)
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 – Senior Wildlife Keeper
Mike Robb – Wildlife Keeper
Leonie Heyder – Wildlife Keeper
Nicki Wells – Wildlife Keeper
Kathy Hackett – Wildlife Keeper

Landscape Division

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

Maintenance Division

Hamish Milne – Builder
Peter Jones – Painter/Handyman

The Trust **welcomes** the following new staff: Ian Archer (Gardner), Hamish Milne (Builder), Peter Jones (Painter/Handyman) and Kathy Hackett (Wildlife Keeper).

Ian Archer



Hamish Milne



Peter Jones



Kathy Hackett



Heritage Village

10 Peacock Street

This historic brick sided bungalow was built in 1899 and was originally one of six bungalows located side-by-side. The other five had been rough cast at some stage, with this particular building being the only one in original condition – hence the Trust salvaged it. Peacock Street originally housed the servants who worked in the large houses along Bealey Avenue in Christchurch central. Upon arrival at the Heritage Village, it was extensively renovated and had its exterior brick side walls completely rebuilt.

