

THE ISAAC CONSERVATION AND WILDLIFE TRUST

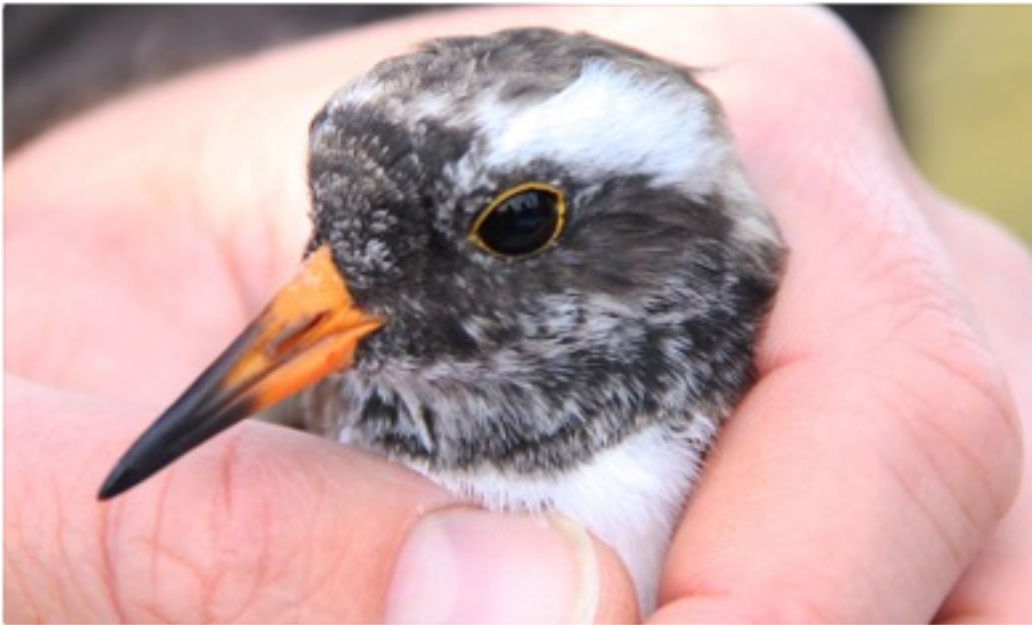
A study in conservation



ICWT NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 8

JULY 2016



ICWT
Property



Who Are
We?



Heritage
Village

Wildlife Division - Autumn 2016

The Autumn period has kept Wildlife Division staff very busy, with many releases to prepare for. With winter approaching the focus will be on maintenance aspects such as weeding.

Black stilt: We are currently at full capacity, with aviaries fully stocked with 45 black stilt juveniles, which will be released in the Mackenzie Basin in August.



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WILDLIFE
DIVISION

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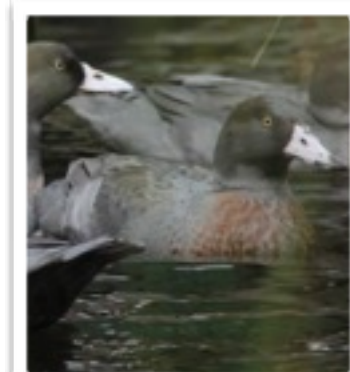
EXTINCTION IS
FOREVER



NZ shore plover: The last of the shore plover juveniles (nine) were finally re-released on Waikawa/Portland Island, after an avian pox outbreak created delays for months. Wildlife Keeper Mike Robb cared for the juveniles in their temporary island holding aviary until they were released. We recently received two new females from Pukaha Mount Bruce National Wildlife Centre, to flock mate with two males which have been held back for breeding. Four pairs bred this season, one pair being a bonus as they were left over (previously unpaired) birds.

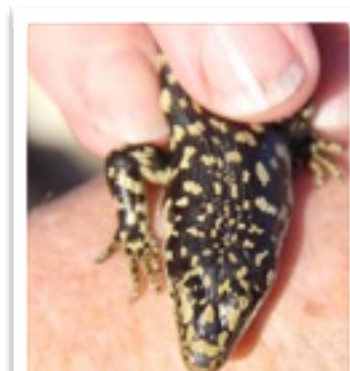
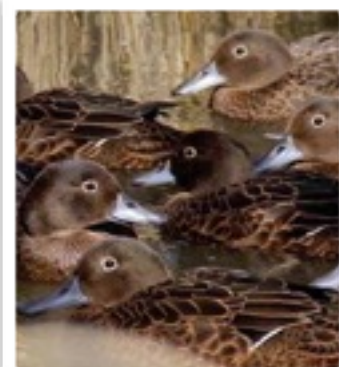
In order for the ICWT to produce NZ shore plover for release into the wild, the captive population must be maintained in healthy condition, with genetic viability being one of the most pressing matters. A research project 'On the conservation genomics of the NZ Shore Plover' by Ilina Cubrinofska, will make a significant contribution towards optimising the captive breeding programme. We are therefore assisting Ilina in her research project.

Orange-fronted parakeet: One of the orange-fronted parakeet females, Polly, has recently begun incubating again. Polly hasn't hatched chicks in some time, so hopefully some of this clutch will hatch. Five pairs bred during the summer/autumn months and are now all having a break over winter. The Department of Conservation monitoring team reports that the last transfer of juveniles to the South Branch Hurunui valley, has been successful, with some birds pairing up and breeding.



Blue duck: The two North Island blue duck pairs are having a well deserved break over winter, after a big breeding season. We are still in the process of flock mating six South Island blue duck juveniles, to create a captive breeding pair (for the initiation of a first captive breeding programme under the Recovery Group). We will be building a third waterfowl aviary for a South Island blue duck pair as soon as planning permits.

Brown teal: We held ~160 brown teal this breeding season. With the recent releases of 85 juveniles, the aviaries have been emptied out for winter. We currently have 7 brown teal ducklings, and the Recovery Group hopes to have ~20 juveniles by August - which will be released with transmitters at Young Nicks Head.



Otago skink: We again had success with Otago skink breeding, with multiple sets of twins born - a great boost for the captive breeding programme. The grand skinks have not reproduced to date, but these were also younger individuals when first collected in the wild for the recovery programme.

ICWT Property

The **Minister for Conservation Hon. Maggie Barry** visited the ICWT to learn more about the captive breeding programme for endangered species, and also took a strong interest in the Conservation Park's native planting programme.



Hon. Nicky Wager (Christchurch Central MP), Andy Roberts

(DOC) and Simon Elkington (DOC) visited the ICWT to view the native plantings at the Otukaikino River restoration project, plus the work achieved by the Trust's captive breeding programmes.



DOC Threatened Species Ambassador Nic Toki attended brown teal release preparations and was filmed for an Air Zealand video.

Lincoln University researchers (Dr Mick Abbott, Dr Sam Yu and Mr Woody Lee) visited the ICWT to learn about our business model and conservation achievements, to forge closer ties between our organisations.

The **Cathedral Choristers** from Cathedral Grammar visited the ICWT in early May, for a development day. The choir boys come to practice at the Lake House four times per year.

There has been a push on maintenance of **Heritage Village** buildings, with four historic structures repainted. Sawyers Arms cottage has now been re-roofed and made watertight, plus repainted externally. More work will commence in spring.

The **Bird Hazard Management Plan** annual report was recently submitted to Christchurch International Airport. The plan implements management practices within the Conservation Park that promote aviation safety by reducing bird hazard risks to aircraft.

Water testing across the property yielded great results that meet NZ drinking water standards. This is excellent considering that we both quarry and dairy farm on the property, and is a reflection of the environmental controls we implement.



An **ANZ native planting day** was held again, with ANZ staff volunteering to weed and plant Lake Diana's north bank.

We will begin preparing an area known as the "corner field", for a large **native planting** programme next autumn. Irrigation has now been installed to prepare the site.

Additional **riparian native plantings** in front of the Lake House have now been completed, and eradication of **crack willow** is ongoing in the Conservation Park.

ICWT Conservation Park

~ An update on the Otukaikino River restoration project ~

The Otukaikino River (south branch of the Waimakariri River) is a stunning multi-branched spring fed river with crystal clear water, in Canterbury, New Zealand.

The ICWT, in association with the Christchurch City Council (CCC) and Fish & Game, is dedicated to improving the water quality of the Otukaikino River. To date the ICWT has set aside land on its eastern boundary, and fenced off waterways from stock, with assistance from the CCC. Over 45,000 eco-sourced natives have now been planted by CCC and Department of Corrections teams. So far a 500 m section of the river has been restored, improving Christchurch water quality - particularly through the Waimakariri Groynes.

The clearing of weeds, and native plantings have been enormously intensive. Amongst the corridor of native plants that now line the river, walkways for the public are currently being developed. A culvert and bridge have been installed to form a loop track. The bridge is currently being re-stained to protect the handrails, and next summer the iron work on the bridge will be painted. The ICWT is continuing to assist with the ongoing maintenance work of the eco-sourced native plantings, which are responding extremely well. Once restoration of the area is completed, the walking track will be made available to the public for passive recreation, and will link in with an existing network of tracks.



Extinction Is Forever

Today many endangered species are on the brink of extinction.

Unfortunately humanity's impacts are continuing to drive species into extinction at a terrifying rate. Recent estimates indicate that 200 species of life (plants, birds, animals, fish, amphibians, insects, reptiles) are driven to extinction every day. This rate exceeds that during the last mass extinction event, meaning Earth is now experiencing its sixth mass extinction event, and humans are the cause.

Here at the ICWT, the main focus is on New Zealand species with a high threat status, specifically endangered and critically endangered species.

Specialist captive breeding is a vital tool in supplementing disappearing wild populations - securing and increasing numbers of endangered species. Captive breeding with the aim of reintroduction into the wild can therefore be fundamental in stabilising or reversing declines.

Until recently the ICWT was the only facility to breed orange-fronted parakeet globally, and is the only facility outside of the Department of Conservation to breed black stilt and NZ shore plover. The ICWT is also the predominant contributor in annual blue duck and brown teal releases.

The ICWT endeavours to aid endangered species conservation management in perpetuity - each year hundreds of rare birds are released into the wild thanks to the ICWT's captive breeding efforts.

The ICWT achieves this great work in partnership with the Department of Conservation, recovery groups, the Zoo and Aquarium Association and many other captive institutions.



Facebook

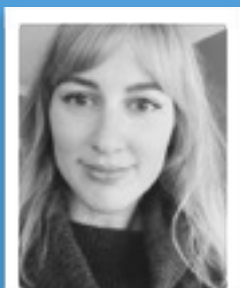


Follow the ICWT's conservation work via Facebook.

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

Our Facebook page has over 11,000 likes and an audience of over 280,000 people!

Find the Facebook link here:
www.isaacconservation.org.nz



Meet The Editor

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

Heritage Village



The historic Drover's Hut in the Heritage Village originates from Fernside Road in Rangiora, North Canterbury.

It was transferred to the ICWT in poor condition and has since been restored to its original state by the Maintenance Division.

A drover was an experienced stockman who moved sheep or cattle "on the hoof" over long distances. Reasons for droving included: delivering animals to a new owner's property or to market, and moving stock during a drought in search of better feed or water. Drover's huts were therefore utilised as overnight short-term accommodation whilst moving stock.



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 – Senior Wildlife Keeper
 Emma Cournane - 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 Isaac Conservation and Wildlife Trust

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