

# THE ISAAC CONSERVATION AND WILDLIFE TRUST

*A study in conservation*



ICWT NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 9

WINTER

OCTOBER 2016



## Wildlife Division

The Winter period has kept Wildlife Division staff busy, with black stilt and brown teal releases plus plenty of maintenance to prepare for prior to the start of the 2016/17 breeding season.

**Black stilt:** The Trust is back to holding only breeding pairs, since the release of all sub-adults in early August. 26 young black stilts were released at the top of Lake Tekapo in the Mackenzie Basin, a new release site. 11 more sub-adults were released the following day. 76 birds were released in total, 35 of those from the Trust. The focus then went to supplementary



1

WILDLIFE  
DIVISION

2

BUILDING &  
LANDSCAPE  
DIVISION

3

OTUKAIKINO  
RIVER



ICWT News

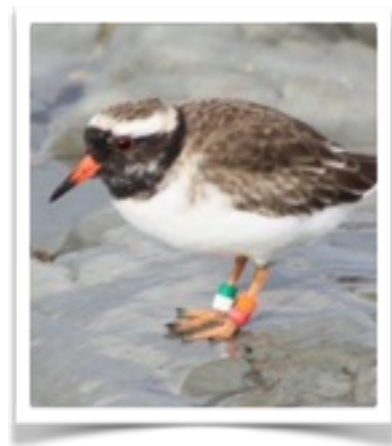


Who Are  
We?



Heritage  
Village

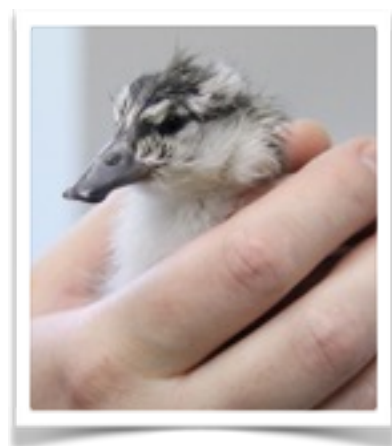
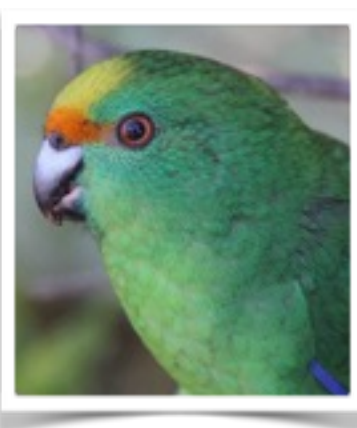
feeding and monitoring released birds, which ceased in early October. Breeding pairs at the DOC facility in Twizel began nest building in early August, while pairs at the Trust began nest building a little later. These have recently been copulating, with eggs due to be laid soon.



**New Zealand shore plover:** The Trust currently has five pairs and the hope is that these will start to lay in early October. The aviaries received a clean out over winter, with a lot of excess reeds removed. We look forward to utilising new insect-proof aviaries for chicks later this breeding season.

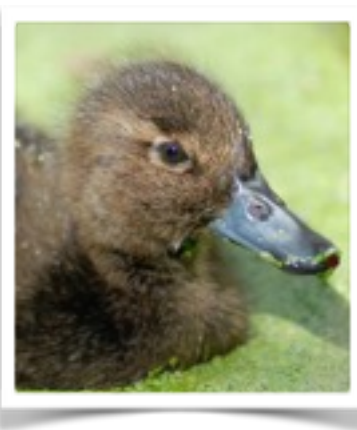
**Orange-fronted parakeet:** All pairs had a break over winter and have begun laying in the last month. Four pairs are currently incubating clutches, but none have hatched yet. One of our old time layers, Polly, has continued to

produce infertile clutches, and she may be due for retirement. We are hoping for a successful breeding season in the wild, to enable transfer of wild clutches into captivity, to diversify the genetics of the breeding programme.



**Blue duck:** The first North Island blue duck pair began laying in early August, and their second clutch of four fertile eggs was recently collected for artificial incubation. In September, conservation dog 'Hoki' and her handler Paul van Klink searched for South Island blue ducks in the Route Burn and Rock Burn valleys of Fiordland. The Southern Alps Security Site on the west coast was also recently surveyed for nesting activity. Hopefully these sites, and others, will provide multiple wild clutches for rearing at the Trust this season. An abandoned clutch also arrived from Karamea – these were cold when collected but appear live.

**Brown teal:** 20 transmittered brown teal juveniles were released at Young Nicks Head (which has a predator exclusion fence) near Gisborne in late August, bringing the total of released brown teal up to 185 for the 2015/16 breeding season. An amazing effort by all the captive breeders who make the translocations possible, helping to boost wild populations of New Zealand's rarest mainland duck. The Trust currently has five pairs with either ducklings or eggs. Three clutches of ducklings are presently on the water in various aviaries.



**“Captive breeding for release into the wild is a critical management strategy for endangered species on the brink.”**

## ICWT News

The **Diana Isaac Cup** was awarded by Te Ara Kakariki Greenway Canterbury Trust to Ian Reid from Morchard Farm of Whitecliffs - for the incorporation of native plants into the working lands of Canterbury's Selwyn District - bringing environmental, ecological and aesthetic benefits to the region.



Courtney Hamblin, current recipient of the **Diana Isaac Scholarship** at Lincoln University, has commenced her M.Sc. studies and field work as part of her thesis. Courtney is investigating how to influence the selection of breeding sites for endangered black-fronted terns on braided rivers, by utilising audio and decoys.

Isaac staff members attended the funeral of **Paul Hope** in early September. Paul worked over three decades for the Isaac Group in multiple roles, both for Sir Neil Isaac and latterly for Lady Diana Isaac.

**Thank you to Hynds** for their donation, a contribution which will make a significant difference for blue duck at our captive breeding facility.

The Trust's application to have **McLean's Island Road speed limit reduced** from 100km/hr to 80 km/hr has been accepted – a great improvement to road safety in the area.

**Isaac House** in Christchurch's CBD has been sold. Its new owners are underway to strengthen and restore this historical building back to its former glory.

**Aoraki Salmon** (tenants of the Isaac's salmon farm site) has been sold to **Mt Cook Alpine Salmon** and we look forward to working with the new owners.

A **Broad Brush Risk Assessment** has been completed for each department, as part of the Trust's commitment to Health & Safety.

**Seismic strengthening** design is underway for the ex-Holcim building on the Isaac's site.

The Trust was recently featured in **Avenues Magazine** showcasing its captive breeding of endangered species, and on **TV3 News** for an annual black stilt release in the Mackenzie Basin.

We endorse the government's commitment for a **Predator Free New Zealand 2050**.



Operations Manager Bruce Rule recently attended the **State Of The Nation** address by Hon. Nick Smith at Lincoln University, plus the launch of **Conservation Week** at the Christchurch Art Gallery.

The Trust will host the next **Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board** meeting in November 2016. We look forward to showing the Board our captive breeding programme and extensive native planting programme at the Otukaikino River restoration site.



## Staff News

**Farewell** to Wildlife Keeper **Mike Robb**, who has worked at the Trust since 2013. Mike was a great team member and always had a good sense of humour. Mike departed to follow his cultural heritage in traditional Maori tattooing.

The Trust **welcomes** recently appointed Wildlife Keepers Leigh Percasky and Hannah Murdoch.

**Leigh Percasky** recently replaced Mike Robb's permanent position. Leigh previously worked at Orana Wildlife Park and prior to this in UK zoos. He is a valued new member to the Trust with his aviculturist experience.

**Hannah Murdoch** recently joined the Wildlife team on a summer contract. She graduated in 2014 with a Bachelor of Science majoring in ecology, and recently finished a Master of Wildlife Management, both at Otago University. Additionally, Hannah also has some fieldwork experience from her wildlife course and volunteering in Australia with reptiles.



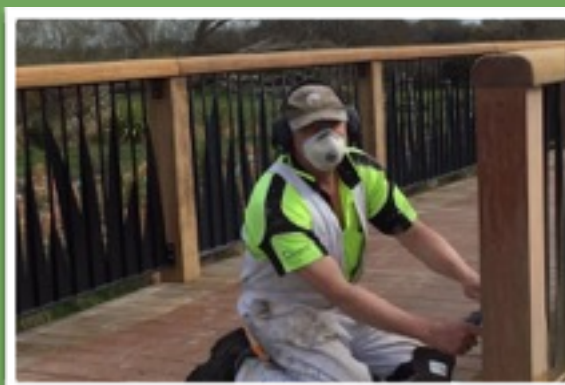
## Otukaikino River Update

The Otukaikino River restoration project continues....

A natural heritage site along the Otukaikino River identified as a **Site Of Ecological Significance** by the Christchurch City Council, has now been completely fenced off from stock.

**Maintenance of the bridge** spanning the Otukaikino River is currently underway, with painting and staining to keep the timber in pristine condition.

The **installation of culverts** has enabled a large native planting programme on the north side of the stream.



## Building Division

Landscaper **Bill Waterman** has been seconded to the Building Division for the summer, due to a large number of building projects. Amongst them are: aviary construction, expansion of Isaac Quarry offices, expansion of the Isaac laboratory, and relocation of the Isaac transport office.

**Clifton Homestead** (ICWT HQ) has had the majority of post-earthquake repairs completed and is looking fabulous.

**Sawyers Arms Cottage** in the Heritage Village has been made completely watertight and its exterior has been repainted.

Work has been completed on eel-proofing and improving the cleaning mechanism of the **wetland aviary grates**.

Soft sided mesh **curtains have been erected** at the end walls of the wetland aviaries to prevent damage to black stilt bills.

An **insect-proof aviary** complex is currently under construction below the raceways. The two aviaries will predominantly be utilised for NZ shore plover chicks to mitigate risk of avian pox, which is transferred via mosquitos.

## Landscape Division

Spraying of the 'corner field' has been very successful and soon mulching will soon commence, in preparation for an **ambitious native planting programme** scheduled for the coming autumn.

**Mowing** across the conservation park is currently underway before the dry summer and potential fire risks.

The **BNZ volunteer planting day** was another huge success, with nearly 40 volunteers planting approximately 2,000 native trees and shrubs along the shores of Lake Diana.

## Facebook



Follow the Trust's work via Facebook.

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

Our Facebook page has 11,600+ likes and an audience of over 280,000 people!



Find the Facebook link here:  
[www.isaacconservation.org.nz](http://www.isaacconservation.org.nz)



# Heritage Village



**The Policeman's House** was one of two historic houses built side by side in Christchurch's Peacock Street in 1905. At the time Peacock Street housed servants who worked in the large homes lining Bealey Avenue.

For the purpose of the Heritage Village this restored building is now referred to as "The Policeman's House" due to its proximity to the adjacent "Papanui Jail".

In 1905 urban development continued to grow, with the emergence of vocations to provide self-sustaining industry for basic household items. This development saw the proliferation of schools, churches and community associations, with Christchurch increasing in size to become a small city.

## 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

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



## Meet The Editor

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

**The Isaac Conservation and Wildlife Trust**

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