

Welcome

Another winter is coming to an end, and the clematis flowering indicates the beginning of spring. As always Rotokare has been a busy place, with bird monitoring, biosecurity and education being a focus.

We have been blown away by both the influx of new friends of the lake and the continued support of current friends this year, so thank you all. Please ensure when you subscribe to the friends of the lake, that you provide us with your details (address, email and phone number). This ensures we can get these newsletters and any other information to you.

With the end of the year looming we would like to invite you all to start submitting photography for our annual fundraising calendar.

email: contact@rotokare.org.nz

*Happy reading, from the
Rotokare team.*



www.facebook.com/rotokare

Birds, birds, and more birds

Rotokare has been a busy place this winter, with a major focus being on bird monitoring. With the translocation of tieke/saddleback and popokatea/whitehead in May, we have been busy monitoring the initial translocation success. This is done by recording as many popokatea sightings as possible, and systematically monitoring the whole reserve for tieke. We are hoping to identify all tieke translocated to Rotokare! We are getting very close, with volunteers relishing the opportunity to follow the birds, trying to read their individual band combinations. To date we have positively identified 55 individual tieke out of 60, which is a great result.



Robins have also been surveyed again this winter, with similar findings to last year. A few less birds than would be expected this long after the pest eradication. More work including banding existing birds is to be done, to get a clearer idea of the population here.



With kiwi breeding season upon us, monitoring of translocated birds has been another focus for staff and volunteers. There are more birds scheduled for release at Rotokare in the near future. Read more about the kiwi work inside!

Kiwi Experiences making a Difference

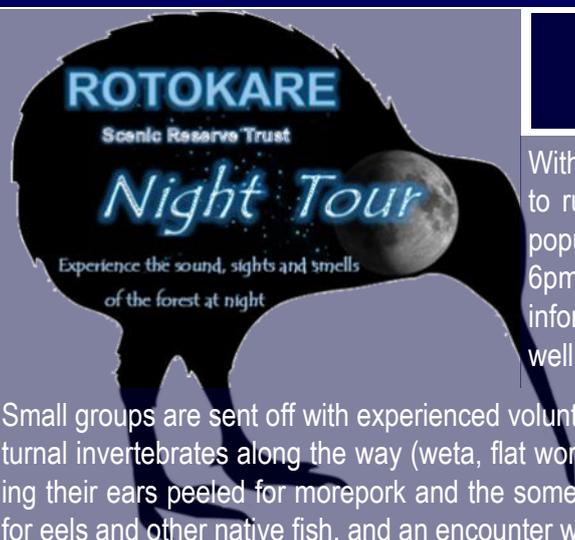
This month we have changed the transmitter on Tu, one of two kiwi at Rotokare with transmitters. Having transmitters on kiwi enables us to monitor health, breeding and other behaviour to ensure the birds are in the best possible health and comfort here at Rotokare.

Tu was incubating eggs on a nest so it was deemed best practice to lift the eggs prior to the transmitter change to avoid any desertion of the nest. Therefore, three separate kiwi experiences were organised for people to be part of the operations, this was great advocacy and fundraising for the Taranaki Kohanga Kiwi Project at Rotokare, a joint project with Taranaki Kiwi Trust. A night egg lift was undertaken with Liz and Wayne Jones of Hawera who patiently waited in the bush until 1am when Tu decided to leave the nest. During the wait we drank hot manuka tea and heard at least seven separate kiwi calls from around the lake as well as many other curious night noises. The egg lift was successful and two kiwi eggs are now safely at Kiwi Encounter in Rotorua. These chicks will be released back to Rotokare with their sponsors present in a couple of months.

The second encounter involved a harness change with a couple from Okato. This time Tu was on the move so proved a little harder to track down, but eventually we caught him and the transmitter was changed.



Many thanks to Rotokare. We had a wonderful day and felt extremely privileged to be able to get so close up with and hold Tu while his transmitter was being changed. We were with a kiwi in his own habitat, something that very few people are lucky enough to experience. Tu nearly gave us the slip and we began to think that we would come back unsuccessful but the team proved to be persistent and skilled. Tu put up with it quite uncomplainingly—we look forward to his incubated eggs hatching and wish him and his future partner every success in breeding more babies for Rotokare. - Lynn & Mike Spencer



Night Tours a Hit!

With improving weather and before daylight savings kicks in, we decided to run two public night tours. Like past years, these have been very popular, with both booking up very quickly. The group assembles at 6pm, they are given a short safety briefing then told some interesting information about the nocturnal life at Rotokare. Images are shown as well as the calls played of nocturnal birds, such as kiwi and morepork.

Small groups are sent off with experienced volunteer guides, who lead their groups through the forest, hunting for nocturnal invertebrates along the way (weta, flat worms, glow worms, koura/freshwater crayfish etc.). All the while keeping their ears peeled for morepork and the sometimes elusive kiwi. This is followed by some spotlighting in the lake for eels and other native fish, and an encounter with the captive nocturnal geckos.

Like us on facebook to stay informed of future night tours, or get in touch for information on a private tour.

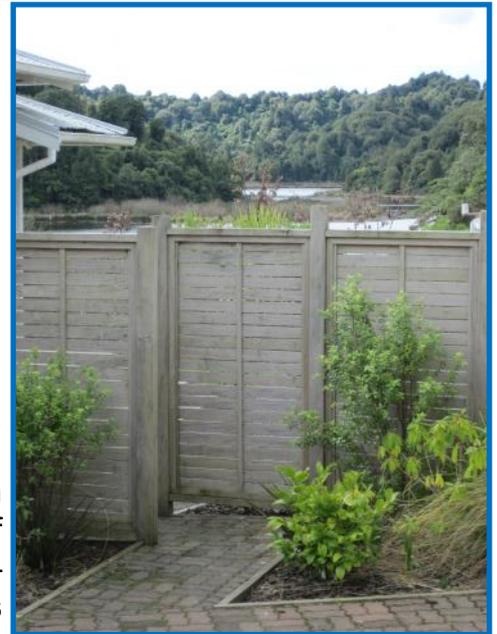
A Day in the Life of the:

As the Rotokare Site Manager, not only do I get to wake up to stunning views and the morning chorus of birds, I get to work in one of the most successful and beautiful sanctuaries in New Zealand. This job is varied, challenging, and involves working with a great group of people, most of whom are volunteers. It is part of my job to coordinate volunteers and give them exciting and diverse opportunities.

Interestingly winter is still a very busy time for the Rotokare Site Manager, and every day is different and exciting. Most days are spent with volunteers, and we couldn't do what we do without them as they are involved with an array of operational work here. Winter activities include wildlife monitoring of toutouwai/robins, tieke/saddleback, popokatea/whitehead, weta and hands-on kiwi encounters. Also helping out with guided tours for visiting groups and schools, fence checking and maintenance, trap construction and checks, and weed and vegetation control.

Another key job in winter is ongoing biosecurity, both within the fenced reserve but also the trap system in the bush reserve outside the fence. We trap pests right around the perimeter of the fence, but increased trapping in this area of 'outside bush' is primarily due to the presence of a pair of tieke in there that had 'jumped the fence'.

We have installed extra possum and stoat traps and have had instant results. That tieke pair have now been seen back inside the fence so hopefully they are happily settling down to nest and breed.



View from the site managers residence



Rotokare Site Manager

An exciting opportunity has come up to **sponsor this new seat**. It is situated prominently on the first viewing platform of the new ridge walk. Giving visitors expansive and magnificent views of the lake, and surrounding bush

Sponsorship of this seat, entitles you to an inscribed plaque attached to the seat, mention in our next newsletter and on our website.

For more information contact us:

06 764 8500 contact@rotokare.org.nz



A Seat with a View !

Rotokare Wishlist

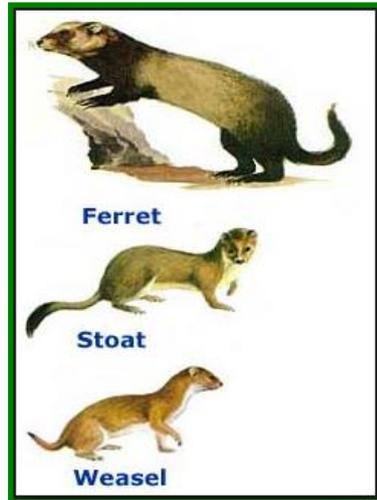
Call us: 06 764 8500 or email: contact@rotokare.org.nz

We have a couple of neat project opportunities for friends of the lake to become involved with. They include the sponsorship of an education taxidermy project and a custom made display case for Trust merchandise.

Tails WANTED Taxidermy Project

There is a nation-wide competition going at the moment for mustelid tails (ferrets, stoats and weasels).

So if you are trapping at home please donate your tails to the trust, as this could mean winning some useful tools for the project.



We already have a good collection of pest species, but we also have a large collection of native species waiting, frozen. If anyone is interested in helping us complete this taxidermy project, we along with thousands of school children each year would be very happy!



Rotokare snapshots : Spring is coming—clematis flowers, our first baby gecko, recent kiwi egg lift

Proud to recognise major sponsors & supporters:

Lottery Grants Board
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TARANAKI VETERINARY CENTRE
Official sponsors of the Rotokare Bush Telegraph

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TET

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Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

TSB Community Trust

Taranaki Regional Council

Keep checking for pests before you come through our gates, thanks for helping us stay pest-free!