

Friends Update

Welcome to all new Friends of the Lake

With warmer weather upon us, we hope you are all making plans to head out to Rotokare. We are holding a Friends of the Lake Open Walk on the 1st of December, and hope to catch up with you all then.

A friendly reminder to please get your Friends of the Lake subscriptions in. This fee not only helps with conservation effort at the sanctuary, but also helps us produce and post these wonderful newsletters.

GET INVOLVED!

We always need volunteers to help with a variety of tasks – all levels of fitness can help. Try it out at one of the weekly Sunday working bees (please arrive at 8.45 am for briefing and a 9 am start) followed by lunch, or talk to us about weekday opportunities.

Email: simon@rotokare.org.nz

In addition to outdoors work there are other tasks that could be taken up:

- Help with admin
- Help spread the word by having a stand at events or markets
- Organise a fund raising event
- Help with maintenance or repair of traps

.....and many more.....

Welcome

As usual Rotokare has been a very busy place over the last three months. With detailed biosecurity work, ongoing Kohanga kiwi operations, night tours, education milestones, and changes in staffing. This issue of the bush telegraph is jammed packed with exciting news and developments.



Farewell to Maj

Unfortunately we have recently said goodbye to our Sanctuary Manager Maj DePoorter. She reluctantly left Rotokare for her dream job working for the Department of Conservation in Wellington in the area of international conservation.



Maj has been an amazing asset to the Rotokare team and we will all miss her, but wish her the very best for her new venture.

To the helm we Welcome Simon

Simon Collins, formerly the Rotokare Site Manager has now taken on the role as our new Sanctuary Manager. With inside knowledge and an already proven passion for the Rotokare Project, Simon is ready to contribute to the sanctuary from another perspective. We are currently working with a new person who will be on deck within the next month as the new Site Manager.



Friends of the Lake Open Walk

Come out and enjoy a guided walk around our new ridge walkway, or see the developments along the old lake walkway.

Sunday the 1st of December 10am-1pm

Sanctuaries of NZ Workshop by Jenny Kerrisk



Five people from Rotokare attended this year's Sanctuaries Workshop held on August 20-21st at Shakespear Sanctuary on the Whangaparaoa Peninsula. The venue was the rather dignified original Shakespear homestead, now a YMCA camp, which had a great atmosphere.

Day One featured presentations on topics ranging from the importance of monitoring biodiversity, to robin populations in forest fragments, to revegetation projects on Motutapu Island, and more. The development of possum-specific poison traps was very exciting; along with an electronic print pad like a tracking card which could be read remotely. It was great to meet a number of people I knew of by name and just generally mingle with so many like-minded folk involved in conservation.

Day Two began with a meeting to officially inaugurate the Sanctuaries of New Zealand Society Incorporated. So we now have a representative body to lobby for sanctuaries, with rules and a committee. A less formal session of brief updates from the sanctuaries present wound up the indoors stuff. Rain outside stopped for just long enough for a field trip around the peninsula including a peek into the old wartime tunnels. Another highlight of the event that must be mentioned was the quality of the food. Next conference may see a time slot for Educators to compare and combine information. Melissa and others are hatching plans...

The two days were a great buzz and we all returned with rejuvenated energy!

5,000 Students

A Major Milestone!

In three short years we have reached our 5000th student through the very popular Rotokare Environmental Education programme. Students from St Josephs School in Hawera enthusiastically assisted as it was their visit that pushed numbers across this major milestone. The programme caters for early childhood right through to senior high school NCEA students, on site.

The programme seems to go from strength to strength, and has received nothing but glowing feedback from participating schools that come from all over Taranaki.

In the last year alone more than 2,000 students participated in this Ministry of Education endorsed programme. Most of their learning is in the outdoors, where activities are set up that are often not possible in a classroom setting. Although Rotokare's own classroom the historic Mangamingi school house, is very useful for introductions and museum type displays to enhance student learning.

We would like to thank all the people involved with the success of our education programme, including the financial support from Taranaki Electricity Trust (the main sponsor of the education programme to date), with additional backing from the Ministry of Education.



Kohanga Kiwi Update – eggs, eggs and more eggs!

The total of 20 kiwi at Rotokare is about to grow rapidly!

Kiwi breeding season is underway and so far five egg lifts have been completed, at Glen Nui, Makino forest, Mt Messenger and two inland and around Waverley. Project partners Taranaki Kiwi Trust and Rotokare have been sharing the work load over this busy time organising lifts.

Egg lifts involve tracking male kiwi to its nest during the day and marking a good trail to it, then returning at night and waiting for the male to leave the nest before going in to fetch the eggs (usually two per clutch). They are packed into an incubator box and carried out of the bush then driven –carefully – to Kiwi Encounter in Rotorua. We aim to lift eggs at about 60 days of incubation – they hatch at 80-90 days, but one of the Makino forest eggs was starting to hatch! One chick from each clutch will come back to Rotokare when a week or two old, while the “second” chick will go to another destination in Taranaki.

There is another egg lift due in the next month, from Whangamomona. Another three male kiwi with transmitters are not yet incubating, but are expected to later in the season. So to slightly exceed our target of 30 kiwi founders in Rotokare, kiwi catchers will need to put transmitters on only three or four more kiwi around Taranaki this season.

Back in July, two schools had a very exciting experience where they helped release kiwi. Captive bred sub-adult “Muggeridge” was released at Rotokare with Rawhitiroa School, while its sibling “Frizzell” was released on the mountain. At the same time “Maikaikatea” from Uruti was released onto a property in Hutuwai Valley with Uruti School. Dynamite (Detonates sibling – living at Rotokare) was also released in Matau in August.



Kara Prankerd, carefully examining and writing ID information on a kiwi egg



Jenny Kerrisk, carefully bundles the precious kiwi egg up in a purpose built travel incubator for the trip out of the bush to Rainbow Springs, Rotorua.

Mouse Update – Summer Biosecurity

We have had a minor mouse incursion over winter. The team is working tirelessly on monitoring and trapping, we have also had assistance from DOC with an expert rodent dog team to help narrow the search. Many factors are potentially responsible for this incursion, including the drought last summer (mice breed well in these conditions), increasing numbers of visiting vehicles, and birds of prey (NZ Falcon, kingfisher etc) dropping live mice inside the sanctuary. Although well under control now, there are

several steps we can all take to ensure we keep the risk of further incursion low. Begin by setting traps by vehicles, check vehicles before entering Rotokare, and pack bags the morning of a trip. The Rotokare team will be actively distributing biosecurity packs again this summer, so make sure you get hold of one, and spread the biosecurity message.



Andrew and Tyke the rodent dog



Come and Enjoy Rotokare this Summer

Please remember to:

- ▶ Leave pets at home
- ▶ Stop at the gates, check your boat, vehicle and bags for rodents

Thanks for helping us stay predator free!



FREE Conservation Courses

Run by NMIT and hosted by Rotokare

- **Plant Identification: 5th-6th November**
- **Five minute Bird Count: 7th-8th November**

These two courses are requirements of the Certificate in Conservation (field skills)

For more information about booking in for these courses call us on 06 764 8500

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Te Whare Wānanga o Te Tau Ihu o Te Waka a Maui



The Perfect Christmas Gift

2014 CALENDARS
Available soon!

\$20.00

Calendars will be available from mid November; we also have the soft toys available for sale too. Contact us for more information.

06 764 8500



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Not a friend of the lake? Join up to support Rotokare and be kept in the loop!

Individual	\$30.00	
Family	\$40.00	
Business/Group	\$50.00	
	Subtotal	
	Voluntary Donation	
	Total	



Tick if you need a receipt

- ✓ 4 Newsletters packed with updates and information
- ✓ Opportunities to be involved in the volunteer programme
- ✓ Invitations to special events and family days
- ✓ Supporting a great community conservation project

Please make cheques payable to Rotokare Scenic Reserve Trust, & send to: P.O Box 33, Eltham, Phone (06) 764 8500 or pay by direct debit to TSB Eltham 153951 0426545-00 (Please include your name and "FOL donation" in the details and "R" if receipt required)

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