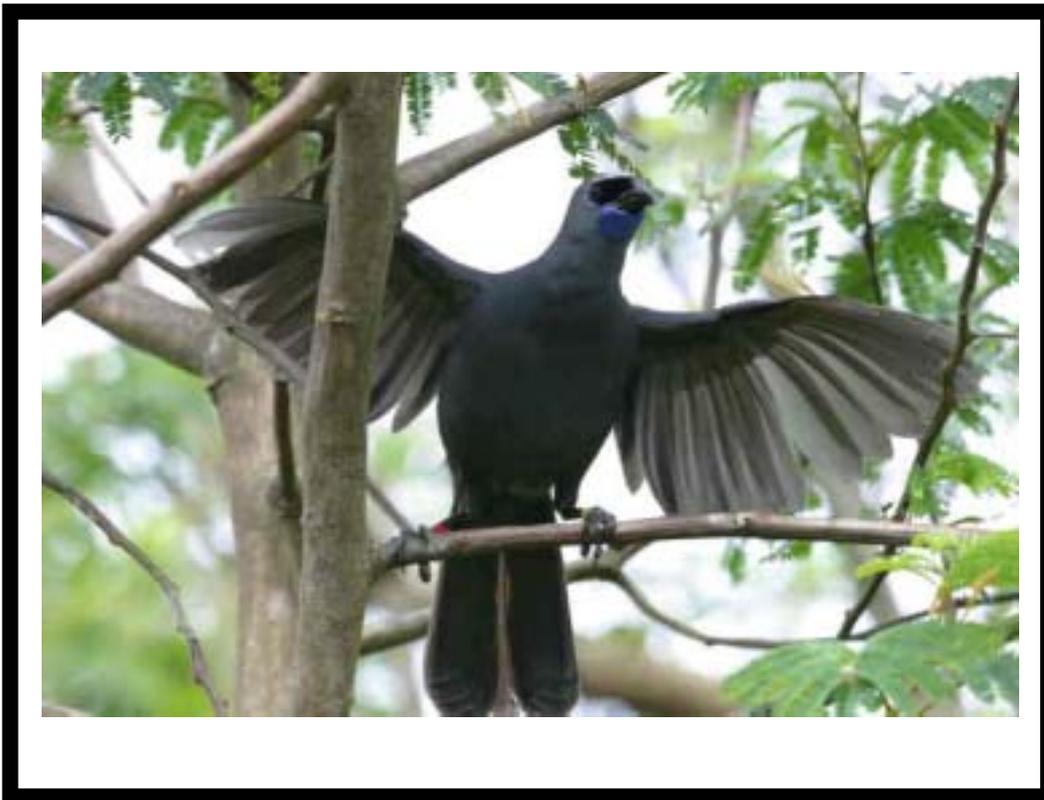


Te Koha Waiata

The Gift of Song



This amazing photograph of a Kokako was taken by Alex Mitchell of Christchurch, whilst on a recent visit to Tiri. The story of Alex's visit, as told by his sister-in-law Ann Hutchinson, plus more of Alex's photography, can be found on Page 10.

Te Koha Waiata (TKW), and "wife" Cloudsley Shovell have, for the fifth consecutive year, successfully fledged 2 chicks. However, for the first time, their offspring have come from 2 separate clutches.

For more details on this, and other breeding this season, see the Flora and Fauna report on pages 6 to 8.

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Dawn Chorus

Dawn Chorus is the official newsletter of the Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi Inc. It is published four times a year. Contributions (including photographs) are gratefully received.

Editorial

One Supporters' working weekend, while supping ale over the barbecue, the comment was made by a fellow committee member, that "being a conservationist doesn't make one an environmentalist". How true this is!

Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi Inc.

PO Box 34-229, Birkenhead, Auckland 1310

The Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi is a non-profit conservation volunteer group. Founded in 1988, to further the aims of the Tiritiri Matangi habitat restoration and species translocation project, our four aims are:

- To promote and enhance the open sanctuary of Tiritiri Matangi and to ensure the continuation of the project.
- To provide financial, material and physical support for the work on Tiritiri Matangi.
- To heighten public awareness of the existence and role of Tiritiri Matangi as an open sanctuary
- To do all such other lawful things as are incidental or conducive to the foregoing objects or any of them.

The annual subscription is:

- -Adult / Family / Corporate - \$20
- -Overseas - \$25
- -Student / Child - \$5

Yet the connection between the two is unquestionable. Much of conservation is about restoring habitats to a level that species can survive and even thrive, and then preserving the restored habitat. Tiri is a classic example of this. Yet being environmentally aware is about protecting the habitats that we already have so that we don't have to restore them later. Perhaps the environmentalist is the fence at the top of the cliff whilst the conservationist is the ambulance at the base.

In this consumer driven world, it is impossible to live one's life without affecting the environment in some way but there are things one can do, in some cases quite easily, to minimise the damage we are causing to the planet. It is easy to sometimes allow cost or convenience to influence decisions we make, without considering alternatives that may have less impact on our environment. How many of us pool transport when we drive to catch the ferry to Tiri?

Most, if not all of us are guilty of sometimes taking natural resources for granted and contributing to the earth's pollution. In a recent edition of "Clipboard", Dick Hubbard stated, "If our natural resources were a bank account, we would currently be running an unauthorised overdraft".

The SoTM committee has discussed this issue in the past and consider that, as a conservation organization, we should be looking to suppliers that have an environmental ethic. One of the obvious starting points was to look at the newsletter production. As of the last issue, our first in full colour, our printer, is now using soy inks and recycled paper.

Whilst this change may have no noticeable effect on the Tiri environment, every single action we take to lessen the damage to our planet has to be positive.

To quote a truism Think globally, act locally!

Simon Fordham

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The opinions of contributors, expressed in Dawn Chorus, do not necessarily reflect the views of the Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi Inc.

Deadline for Autumn Newsletter
April 30 2003

Page 3 Bird

Don't Miss the AGM

Monday 17 March

Guest Speaker—Carol West

As a student, Carol was instrumental in developing the replanting program for Tiri

Please note the change of venue this year - see flyer for details.



"Well, once again, here we are."



Photo Simon Fordham

Morepork

Ruru

Ninox Novaehelandiae

The Morepork is New Zealand's only surviving native owl.

Although nocturnal, the Morepork is often seen on Tiri during the day, especially on the Kawerau Track, often roosting in a tree fern. A delightful sight around Christmas time is Mum and Dad and their fluffy offspring all perched along a branch, staring at you with such a serious expression as you walk by.

Sometimes a roosting Morepork is discovered by the other birds who will then mob it until it flies off to finish "snoozing" elsewhere.

At night the call 'morepork' is a very familiar sound in the New Zealand bush, exotic forests and even town gardens. Their other calls include a low monotonous 'more, more, more....' And a repeated "cree" when hunting.

This small dark brown owl is obscurely spotted and barred buff, and the legs are feathered to the ankle. The large yellow eyes, directed forward give good binocular vision in low-intensity light and are set in a brown circular facial disc of feathers which helps to direct sound to the large ear openings. Due to their very flexible neck, the whole of the head can be rotated through 270 degree to look for prey at the side or the rear. As their plumage is soft and wing feathers have softened edges, the flight is silent so the bird can hear the prey but the prey can't hear the bird.

Food is predominantly wetas but, after cleaning out the remains of a Morepork nest in a hollow branch of a Pohutuka wa tree on Tiri, the leg bands of Stitchbird, North Island Robin and Saddleback were discovered, as well as the remains of some Red - Crowned Parakeet. Also, on one occasion during the day, a Morepork was seen catching a robin. Pellets of indigestible material (bones, feathers) are cast under their daytime perches.

If the Southern Boobook of Australia is treated as a separate species, the New Zealand Morepork is one of three subspecies. Before human settlement our Morepork was considered scarce but the introduction of small mammals changed this and the New Zealand Morepork is now widespread and moderately common. The Lord Howe Island Morepork subspecies sadly is extinct and by 1985 the Norfolk Island Morepork subspecies was down to one female "Miami". Although it was impossible to save the original subspecies from extinction it was decided to try and retain the genetics of this subspecies by introducing two male New Zealand Morepork, "Tintola" and "Fletcher" to Miami in 1987. In 1988 Fletcher disappeared but Miami and Tintola successfully raised two chicks in 1989 and again in 1990. Miami disappeared in 1995 but there are now thought to be approximately 18 hybrid Norfolk Island Morepork.

New Zealand's only endemic owl, the Laughing Owl, *Sceloglaux albifacies* (Whakau) was last recorded in 1914.

Morag Fordham

Don't Forget the Tiri Shop!

Gifts suitable for all occasions!

Think ahead to winter chills—how about a warm polar fleece jacket of polar fleece beanie hat Or a new sweatshirt.

Also a good selection of books for adults & children.

Ask Barbara - 476 0010



From the Chair

Welcome to the first newsletter for 2003. I hope that everyone had a safe and happy holiday period (for those lucky enough to have them). This year promises to bring some exciting projects to fruition on the island, much as a result of considerable groundwork by the Supporters' committee over the last few years. This will include the long awaited construction of a visitor's centre at the lighthouse station together with the erection of a wharf shelter at the landing, also a long outstanding project. Watch this bulletin for news of these developments as the year unfolds.

Traditionally annual holidays are an opportunity to undertake leisure activities with family and friends. Many of these activities in New Zealand are associated with outdoor pursuits that may include pastimes such as tramping through some of the National Parks of New Zealand (and of course visiting Tiri). The National parks generally contain much of our wild heritage and give visitors an opportunity to appreciate New Zealand's unique flora and fauna. They help to provide an understanding of what we as a nation have lost and what we still have today. My holidays this year gave me an opportunity to conduct a short tramp through one of these parks, the Te Urewera national park. This magnificent park (the 4th largest in New Zealand) represents the last significant area of lowland forest left in the North Island, extending over 212,000 hectares. The scenery at the park is visually stunning with ancient giant Rimu's towering above the forest canopy together with stunning views of Lake Wakaremoana, surrounded by native forest to the waters edge.

However with all this before me, there was something noticeably missing. The walk was conducted in almost absolute silence, and feeling was the same as if one was walking inside a mausoleum. Sure, there were Tomtits and Rifleman at various points along the track (species we want to eventually transfer to Tiri), and Bellbirds called occasionally, but otherwise very little else could be heard or seen. It was a poignant reminder why the sanctuary of Tiritiri Matangi is so important and how spoilt visitors to Tiri are. To walk through the Wattle Track on Tiri and to listen to the constant calls of a wide variety of birds at every corner of the track is indeed a great privilege and should not be taken for granted. The island is only a fraction of the size of Te Urewera and is covered only in regenerating forest and scrub (in stark contrast to the fabulous forest at Te Urewera), but the impact of the wild life on the visitor is much greater. Visiting other conservation sites tend to demonstrate and enhance the value of the work performed by the thousands of volunteers on Tiritiri, together with the financial assistance of the Supporters.

Tiritiri, although too small to become a significant refuge to save any species from extinction, despite having a role in this, it has a high value in terms of advocacy of New Zealand's endangered endemic species, both to visitors who come to see what wild life should be in our forests and to students wanting to learn and understand the lessons to be learnt from past ecological mistakes. By providing infrastructure that enhances the appreciation our wild life, such as a visitor's centre, Tiritiri Matangi will continue to serve the role of providing awareness what our forests should sound like.

Carl Hayson



School Visits

Whangaparaoa Primary (2 Trips)
Hunua School
St. Kentigerns School (2 Trips)
Kamo Intermediate
Rotorua Intermediate
Glenfield College
Waiuku College
Marist College (2 Trips)
Maraenui School, Ohorere
Howick Intermediate

KCC Banner Winners
Grey Lynn School

Working Bees Thank You!

- Forest & Bird South Auckland
- Robin Kearns' Weekend
- OSNZ Bird Count
- SoTM Anniversary Weekend

Floor Polishing

A big thank you to Vick Sharma , manager of Prestige Services Ltd, who donated his time and materials to strip , seal and polish the vinyl floors in the stitchbird room in the implement shed and the flooring throughout the bach. These floors were have never been properly treated since they were installed and were very difficult to clean. Now with the newly polished surface they are easily cleaned and both Barbara and Ian are very pleased with the results.

John McLeod

The 5 Year Plan

Where to from Here?

Early last year, the committee formulated a draft plan outlining key intentions for the Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi over the next 5 years. This was presented to the Annual General Meeting in March and also published in the Autumn edition of Dawn Chorus. Some of our members expressed concern that they felt that they had not had the opportunity to provide input to this plan. There were a number of different suggestions as to how this might be achieved but, in the end, it was decided that the most effective way would be to invite written submissions.

The closing date for submissions was 31 January and 6 were received. Some of the suggestions were to wholly support or oppose aspects of the plan whilst others related to changes in the detail of the topics. As one would expect, opinions on specific items were expressed from "both sides of the fence".

As part of the process, it was intended that, should the submissions reveal widespread concern on any specific aspects of the plan then further input would be sought on these items. The submissions did not indicate this.

The committee have given due consideration to the submissions, as well as earlier suggestions by members. Accordingly, a number of minor changes have been made to the plan.

These are:

- Increased emphasis on education for younger people.

- Removal of reference to Marine Reserve. This does not reflect a view to the contrary. However, it is evident that there are a number of issues to be worked through and we will be seeking members' input before we commit SoTM one way or the other.
- Generalize plans regarding the accommodation improvements. We can then consider the detail based upon input from interested parties.
- Remove detail of \$ to be spent as this is a matter of detail to be decided when appropriate.
- Delete "on a selected basis" from section 6—Ecotourism. Tiri is an Open Sanctuary so, left as is, would be contrary to the purpose.

The committee feel that it is important

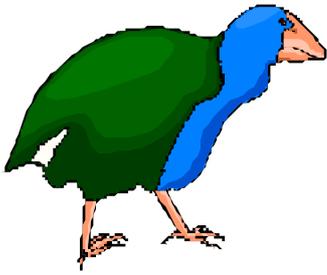
that the 5 Year Plan be ratified by the membership. For this reason, it will be presented at the AGM for approval. Members will, of course, have the opportunity to speak for or against the motion and/or seek clarification on aspects of the plan. However, it is not intended that this be a forum for discussing the detail or amending the document.

It is important to remember that, should the plan be accepted, it is still only a guiding document. Nothing is set in concrete until passed either by the committee or, if necessary, a general meeting of the membership. Members will still have the opportunity, and are encouraged to, offer their opinions on any matter, either by talking to or writing to committee members or through the Dawn Chorus.

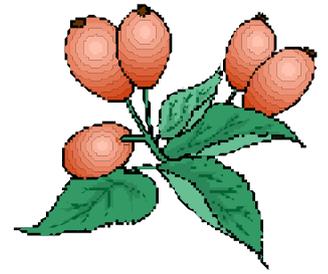
Members are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the plan prior to the AGM. This can be found in Bulletin 49, Autumn 2002.



This photo, taken by Jonathon Higgins, shows what can happen when affected parties don't agree with the rules of the island. Perhaps kevlar might be a better choice of material for our signs.



Flora and Fauna Notes



Compiled by Barbara Walter &
Morag Fordham

Flora

At the beginning of December, Barbara discovered a very beautiful orchid with blue flowers, *Thelymitra pauciflora*, not seen before on Tiri.

Although the pohutukawas were late flowering, it was a stunning display much admired by all the visitors to Tiri over the holidays. Our Tuis, Bellbirds, & Stitchbirds dined well for a few weeks.

Muehlenbeckia (pohuehue) flowered well providing lots of food for the Kakariki.

It is a good season for the ngaio fruit, the puahou (five-finger) is fruiting well and the houpara has flower buds. Also the karamu and karaka fruit is now ripening.

At the beginning of December the mahoe did not appear to be flowering well (due to the late spring and stormy weather?) but it is now flowering profusely with its beautiful strong perfume. If there are no more nasty storms there will be abundant fruit shortly.

Fauna

Takahe

The lighthouse gang of JJ, Kaitiaki, Rossie and Blakie failed in their first nesting attempt as one egg was infertile and the other, a late dead embryo. Kaitiaki then chased Rossie away so for JJ's second clutch she had Kaitiaki and Blakie with her. Again one egg was infertile and the second egg fertile. On hatching their chick was always getting into trouble and survived many of its lives until we had a torrential storm when the chick was approximately 12 days old,

never to be seen again. Needless to say, Pukeko are far superior parents as, in the next territory, their chicks only a few days old survived!

Ahikaea and Kristin's two chicks are now three months old and Sapphire their previous year's chick has also been helping. Unfortunately Kristin has disappeared and is now presumed dead so Ahikaea and Sapphire have done well. This is the first time on Tiri that two chicks have survived together. Blackwatch periodically attempts to join them but Sapphire chases him away.

Aroha and Glencoe had two chicks but one was found dead when only a few days old. Their other chick is doing well and is now three and a half months old.

Blossom and Iti have been together four seasons and previously all eggs had been infertile. We were beginning to think Blossom was infertile. Iti always nests late in the season and she had had treatment for a liver infection in September so we didn't think she would nest at all. However she laid one egg which hatched, but the chick was found dead, thrown out of the nest at approximately four days old. The good news is that we now know that Blossom is fertile.

Adot and Greg nested for a second time and again their eggs were broken. A third nest was built but nothing happened. They are very happy together but Greg (without a chick to look after) is teaching her bad habits. They spend a lot of time on Hobbs Beach to the delight of most visitors & the despair of others!!

Irene and Bellamy didn't know about "the birds and the bees business" this year – they didn't attempt to nest!

We now have four males, Rossie, Whetu, Whakama and Blackwatch wondering who will get the ladies next season (Ahikaea, Sapphire and Blakie) ???!!

Most of the Takehe are moulting at present and look a little like feather dusters but they will soon be in prime condition again!

Stitchbird (Hihi)

We have 48 nests for the season, including one natural nest (a first for Tiri). To date there are 76 adults, 79 chicks fledged including one from the natural nest, 29 chicks still in the nests yet to fledge, and one nest yet to hatch. If all succeed we will have 108 – 112 fledglings for the season. Last year we had more nests but fewer fledglings with 71 nests and 103 fledglings. Most importantly 50% of last years juveniles survived. The morepork nest had bands from at least 5 of last years' fledglings. Two of the original birds from 1995 survive (female G/M, male M/RR although he does have a tumour but is OK). The one eyed Hihi, the one legged Hihi and the Hihi with the deformed tongue are all alive.

N I Robin

There were 39 active adult pairs at the start of the season. Due to the changeable weather and the insects being a month later than usual, many pairs have nested for a third time as their earlier nests failed. We know of 82 chicks, 79 banded and 3 unbanded but many of these didn't fledge or survive. At present there are around 130 robins in total.

Kokako

Although this season started off well results are a little disappointing.

Cloudsley Shovell (CS) and Te Koha Waiata (TKW) produced one chick from their first clutch, Oscar (RM/Y) who fledged on 18 December. On leaving the nest, he was fed by both parents but it was soon noted that TKW was left to feed him as CS re-nested very quickly. Although she had 3 eggs in her second clutch, only one hatched (the other 2 were early dead embryos) but this chick (RM/R) is doing very well.

Shazbot and Te Hari's first clutch of 2 eggs was abandoned but she re-nested at the beginning of January. Although 2 of the 3 eggs hatched, the chicks disappeared without trace towards the end of the month.

Kahurangi and Bel Canto's first clutch of 3 eggs also failed. She re-nested at the same time as Shazbot and had 2 eggs. Sadly this nest also failed – 1 early dead embryo, and 1 late fully developed embryo that didn't hatch.

Sadly one of CS and TKW's chicks from last season, Tiritiri Koha who went to Hamilton Zoo, unexpectedly died in December from a ruptured blood vessel on an ovarian cyst. The other chick, Tiritiri Waiata has settled in well at Auckland Zoo and is interacting well with her mate.

Whitehead

Good sightings of families, especially in Wattle Valley and on the Kawerau Track. Kevin Parker has been assessing their numbers for a proposed translocation of some to the Hunua Ranges later on this year.

Saddleback

To date, it has been a very late and poor breeding season. The insects, being a month behind have probably contributed to this situation. Usually Bush 22 produces a good number of nests and chicks but we know of only a couple of successful nests. 9 birds were taken from this area for translocation to Karori so it will probably take 2 – 4 years for these territories to be repopulated.

We have had an interesting nest in Wattle Valley. Unusually, the nest contained 4 eggs, but 3 of these gradually disappeared without trace.

We also discovered that 2 birds have been swapping over and also incubating the eggs at the same time. Usually only the female incubates. Sadly at the end of January, the remaining egg was abandoned.

Brown Teal

Rose, from Pumphouse Dam has successfully reared 2 ducklings who have now lost all their fluff and are looking quite handsome.

Finn - the Philanderer, their dad, spends most of his time with Daisy on Fisherman's Dam. At Christmas time he took "time out" to visit the Bunkhouse Dam where he beat up the resident male, Danny who consequently moved out and reappeared at the Wharf Dam with Jemima. After a few weeks Danny went back to Eva on the Bunkhouse Dam but just recently he spent another "night of passion" with Jemima on the Wharf Dam but has now returned to Eva. (Who needs Coro St – watch this space for a further instalment of "Soap on the Water").

Kaka

It has been a good summer for Kaka sightings on Tiri. Three were often seen, quietly feeding on kohekohe seeds on the Kawerau Track. They often flew over to the gum trees between the houses to roost for the night. By mid January only one appeared to remain and it was seen roosting in the same gum trees. Recently, two have again been seen in the Kawerau Track.

Fernbird

Mike Siddens, Kevin Parker and Val Smytheman have all seen unbanded Fernbirds so they are obviously breeding successfully on Tiri.

Little Spotted Kiwi

Many close sightings over the Christmas holiday period. One evening in 16 January, a male was found trapped in the aviary and was successfully released by Morag and Simon Fordham. Once released he only moved a couple of metres away, called very loudly then started looking

for food – obviously less stressed by his ordeal than his rescuers!

Red – crowned Parakeet

Once again Red – Crowned Parakeet have been nesting in Saddleback nesting boxes and, in one case, have used a Robin nesting box (never used by Robin on Tiri but often used by Saddleback). We are now starting to see the fledglings.

Variable Oystercatcher

Around Christmas time, the pair of at the far end of Hobbs Beach had 3 chicks but 1 later disappeared. The pair by the wharf had 1 chick. This chick is now starting to colour up. Another 2 chicks were seen on the reef. Recently a chick we were unaware of was found with a broken wing and has been sent to Bird Rescue.

Morepork

The pair of Moreporks in the Kawerau Track appear to have raised one chick. The nest site was inspected but was extremely deep and not all the bird remains could be brought out. However, the following bird bands were found – 5 x Stitchbird, 2 x Saddleback, 2 x Robin. There are probably more bands out of reach.

Other Birds

Many Kingfishers have successfully raised their first clutch and are now on their second.

An adult Blue Penguin was found with leg damage late last year and taken to Bird Rescue. Sadly the bird's foot has had to be amputated so he cannot manage in the wild and he will be sent to the Napier Marine Park. Two underweight chicks also sent to Bird Rescue are now gaining weight and will be brought back to Tiri waters for release back into the wild.

The first lot of Brown Quail with "bumble bee" chicks was seen in the first week of 2003. Most clutches this season appear to have 4–6 chicks but only a few will survive into adulthood.

continued on Page 8

..... Flora & Fauna continued

Bellbird doing very well again with lots of fledglings being seen, especially from their second clutches.

Once the pohutukawa flowered, the Tui started nesting and there are now a number of fledglings around.

Lot of sightings of N Z Pigeon (Kereru) on both boardwalks but no sign of any juveniles.

A Reef Heron was followed by Simon Fordham, whilst kayaking from N W Bay to Hobbs Beach in mid January.

A Long Tailed Cuckoo seen on 7 January by Rudd Kleinpaste

A male Tomtit was seen on 5 January on the Kawerau Track.

An N Z Dotterel flew over, calling in flight, when Graham Ussher & Ruby Jones were getting married on Tiri on 8 December.

In past years we have always had Eastern Rosella nesting on Tiri. This season we have not even seen one. Perhaps the increased number of Red - Crowned Parakeet has pushed out the Rosella.



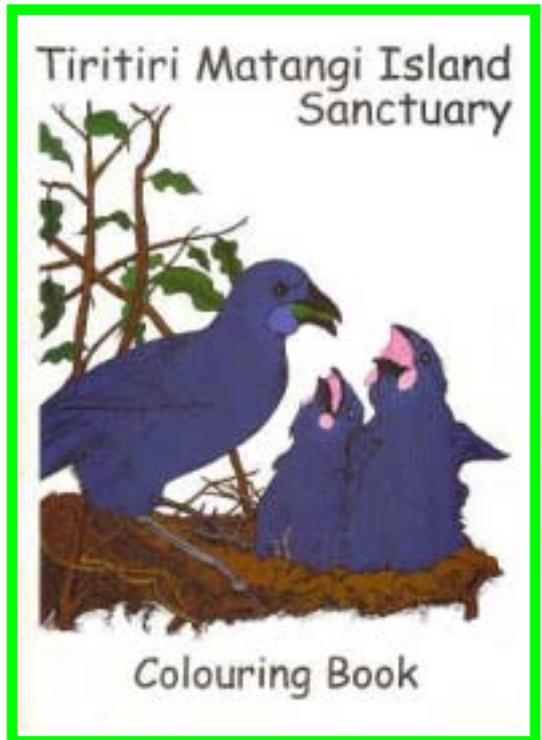
Aroha & Glencoe's Chick at 2 Months

Conservationists may sometimes make uncomfortable neighbours but they sure make very good ancestors
Dick Hubbard

New Colouring Book on Sale Now!

By Faye Booker

Tiritiri Matangi Island now has its own colouring book. It is the result of the year 12 St. Cuthbert's College Students' values project. Inspired by their biology field trip to the island in March 2002, the students decided they wanted to help. The result is a high quality colouring book, on sale for \$5 in the island shop.



The book has a brief outline of the island's history and pictures of most of the common birds on the island (with both common & Maori names). The students designed the book themselves; - all but one of the artists are students. They sold hot chips and muffins and approached companies for donations towards the costs of production. With the generous 25% discount from Kale print, they were able to fully fund the production of the book themselves so that every book sold contributes \$5 back to the island.

The books were delivered to the island on Friday 20 December 2002 and officially handed to Barbara by Anna Washer, one of the leaders of the St. Cuthbert's College year 12 values team



Anna presenting a copy of the book to Barbara with Kaitiaki in the background.

Photo Brent Booker



Flights of Fancy

by Anne Hutchinson



Being a Tiri guide took on a new dimension when I spent one Friday in December as a photographer's apprentice. My brother-in-law, Alex Mitchell is a professional photographer of old warplanes and had expressed an interest in checking out a different kind of flier. I was looking forward to sharing Tiri with him.

Pausing at the welcoming station to check with Barbara, "Its alright dear, I don't need you. Off you go." I caught up with Alex glaring at a party of overnights who had just disturbed his Kakariki. Doubtless they were earnestly complying with the directive to take the road and not watch birds on the way! What I need, said Alex, is some time on this island on my own...

At the start of the Wattle track we were lucky enough to see a Kokako. Retreating rear view unfortunately, not the angle the cameraman had ordered. Plunging on up the track we saw only a few birds, regrettably in the shade. My muttered apology about a lot of birds nesting at the moment received a quizzical eyebrow. Chancing my arm up the firebreak we did not encounter Glencoe and Aroha as I had rather hoped, complete with chick, but a rather baleful Blackwatch regarding us over the flax, so we moved on hastily.

Over lunch Alex amused himself by photographing Mynah birds in the

absence of anything more special. I was beginning to feel pretty endangered myself. What I need, said Alex, is some time on this



Photo Alex Mitchell

island by myself... Fortunately Isabel came to the rescue by pointing out a distant Kaka. By the time his lens had fulfilled its potential it was revealed in feather by feather definition.

Returning via the Kawerau track revealed several Stitchbirds. These apparently weren't suitable because they had leaves in front of the birds. This photography business is a bit harder than I imagined. A snoozing morepork had had the temerity to choose a dark spot under the ponga. Robins refused to present themselves in

the best light. The guide was failing to produce the goods.

Emerging by the cliffs the sun came out, and so did the birds. The photographer swung into action. This was more like it. Saddlebacks cavorting in crimson laden pohutukawas against a bright blue sky. Fullers ferry moored in an idyllic bay. A Tui having a bath in the sun (we were back up the wattle track by then) Finally in a moment of pure Tiri magic, TKW appeared to take a bow. The

photographer was hooked. Next time he's in Auckland Alex will be begging Barbara for a bit of bunkroom space for another session. On his own.....

The results of Alex's endeavours and other unrelated fliers can be seen on:

www.warbirdsovernewzealand.com





Farewell to Murray

by Ray Walter



The original ride on mower (a Murray), donated by the supporters 10 years ago has come to the end of its economical life and was beginning to cost significant money in running repairs as well as down time. Therefore the committee gave Ray permission to purchase a replacement.

There was a need to look at a more robust machine than the Murray (which was designed as a domestic mower), preferably with an out front deck which would allow closer cutting to fences and hedges. Several machines were looked at and Ray eventually decided on a Masport Snapper ride-on mower from Wilmot Motors in Warkworth, who are the local agents for this model. A test drive around the footpaths in and around the yard at Wilmots convinced Ray that this was the exact machine required.

Jeff Hatful, the Wilmots' salesman, was asked if Wilmots would give the "Supporters" a discount on the purchase price. Jeff came back to us with a very generous reduction in the price as a result of



Photo Carl Hayson

Wilmots

discussions with the proprietor, Les Wilmot. The mower has come up to all expectations and is certainly a cut above the old mower!

Supporters would like to extend to Wilmot Motors a sincere appreciation for their generosity.

SPECIAL VISITOR

Last year, Tiri was visited by Jean Bucknell. Before retiring, Jean was on Maud Island whence our 3 original Takahe came.

Many of our visitors comment on JJ of the "Lighthouse Gang" and wonder how she got her name. Her name was derived from the initials of the two ladies who discovered her, Jean & Joan, a friend of Jean's.

Jean was very excited at seeing her special Takahe, who left Maud Island in August 1992. JJ was the first known Takahe to breed at one year of age. She hatched on Maud Island in November 1990 - dear Maudie was her mother - and at one year had a 2 egg nest. One egg was infertile and the chick from the other was predated.

During her Tiri days, her chicks have been Aroha, Ili, Kowhatu (deceased), Manawanui (deceased), Glencoe, Adot, Rossie and Blake. Whetu was also from one of her eggs but cross-fostered to Aroha and Mr. Blue, who was infertile.



Photo Marie Neverma



Calendar of Events

2003

Monday 17 March
Annual General Meeting



April 12–13
Supporters' Families Weekend



May 3–4
Supporters' Non-Working Weekend

April 18–21

Supporters' Easter Working Weekend

May 31–June 2
Supporters' Queen's Birthday Working Weekend

Sunday 1 June
Supporters' Planting Day
Belknap Trip
Planting in Sh



Supporters' Weekend



For all of the above (except

10 Years Ago

Excerpt from Bulletin 13, May 1993

It is probably old news to most readers that Stormy & JJ had paired and produced 2 eggs. Both eggs were successfully hatched, which is not common as the second egg is often infertile. Sadly, the second of the chicks died (in rare circumstances, second born chicks have survived). The first born chick, named Aroha, which in Maori means love, is progressing very well. On the 28th of March, when 11 weeks old, she/he weighed 1.21 kg. Since then, no further measurements have been made.

OBITUARY

Terry Laver
1 November 1942 – 29 November 2002

Terry Laver was a man of many interests and talents. He had an insatiable curiosity for natural history from an early age which led him to study science at university. He became a teacher, spending 38 years at Rutherford High School. There he also ran a night class on the flora and fauna of New Zealand. This class became so popular that the students kept returning year after year...some for the 19 years Terry ran it! The group took field trips to the Waitakere Ranges which expanded to other North Island and then South Island destinations and even to the Pacific Islands, calling themselves the Lemmings. Terry enjoyed teaching people of all ages when they showed an interest in learning. In order to enjoy the great outdoors he annually instructed school kids in the science of skiing when on school camps at Tongariro National Park. Middle aged Lemmings learned to snorkel and dive in a school swimming pool under Terry's tuition in preparation for trips to Fiji and the Cook Islands.

Terry had wonderful culinary skills, producing four course dinners for friends. He even used these opportunities to educate his captive audience about special herbs or exotic vegetables incorporated in the menu.

He loved music and the dramatic arts. At school he involved himself in dramatic shows as a make up artist. His classroom behaviour could be quite dramatic too and captured the imagination and attention of even the 7th formers. An achievement marvelled at by his colleagues!

Earlier this year Terry finally responded to the suggestion from several friends that he offer himself as a guide on Tiri. This he was enjoying; his long experience in teaching and his knowledge and love of nature ensuring a quality experience for those whom he guided.

He died on 29 November in the company of Lemming friends, enjoying life to the full on a natural history/tramping trip to Fiordland. He was a man with an infectious enthusiasm for life and will be greatly missed.

Glenys Mather

Troubled Bridge over Waters

Northern Bypass Under Construction

Text by Peter Lee

Photos By Simon Fordham

If you've walked the track to Northeast Bay recently, you may be forgiven for thinking that you've been seeing double. Bridges, that is. In addition to the old bridge across the stream just up from the beach, there's a brand spanking new bridge nearly completed about 20m downstream. And it's largely the work of the Supporters' Anniversary Weekend working group.

However, don't be confused – it's not in response to increased visitor numbers, and the Supporters isn't about to duplicate every track and bridge. It's a result of DoC's most recent survey, some months back, which indicated that the bridge failed to comply in a number of ways with current building standards. While it was perfectly safe, in the long term it needed to be improved. Ray's assessment was that it would be easier and less costly to replace the entire structure – so that's what faced our band of volunteers over three days.

First, assemble your equipment... easier said than done! We couldn't get direct access to the site, owing to the narrow zigzag nature of the track, so everything had to be manhandled down the hill - including very heavy five-metre lengths of 300 x 100 wood, destined to be the main



beams. Under the careful supervision of almost-live-in chippie Ian Higgins, we first erected the six posts – two at each end, and two in the middle. A few bags of ready-mix concrete secured them in place, while the main beams were put up. Meanwhile, a gang of six of us hacked and slashed out a new length of track through the wild and dense flax and gorse jungle. (Think I'm exaggerating? Ever tried removing flax in a confined space??)

Next day we did the main concreting. Founding chair, Jim Battersby, controlled the mixing of the concrete up top, while three of us navies barrowed the loads of concrete down the hill, poured them into the appropriate spots, and went up the hill for another load. Repeat this simple recipe a dozen times or so, and your concrete is finished - and so were we at the end of it all! Meanwhile, a party by the bridge was tamping down the concrete.

Our stint ended on the Monday with the erection of most of the handrails, as well as some of the decking. While we couldn't get the bridge finished, at least we had the satisfaction of having completed most of it. We left behind a few additional touches, too – bits of skin, the odd spot of dried blood, you get the picture... but it was fun.

Now, about that second harbour crossing.....