



Planting days  
6 May Sunday  
2 - 3 June Sat & Sun  
1 July Sunday  
5 August Sunday  
Start time 9.15 am  
BBQ provided

TAWHARANUI OPEN SANCTUARY SOCIETY INC.  
Newsletter No. 40. March 2012



Nature Abounds at Art in the Woolshed 2012 celebrating Tawharanui Open Sanctuary's tenth year.



Kereru by Mark Dimock



Kiwi by Danny Wright



Piwakawaka by James Wright

Tawharanui Open Sanctuary is a joint project with Auckland Council.



## Coming Events—Sunday in the Park

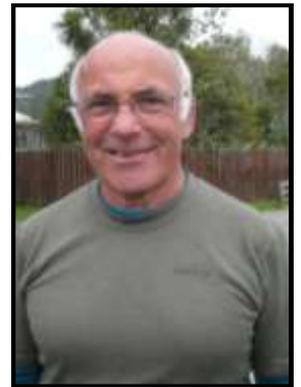
<u>Sun. 1 April</u>	9.15 am Sunday in the Park. Host Steve Harrison. BBQ provided.
<u>Sun. 6 May</u>	9.15 am. Planting begins. Bring a drink, gloves, sturdy boots and raincoat. BBQ provided.
<u>Sat. 2 and Sun 3 June</u>	Queens Birthday Weekend. 10th anniversary celebration for TOSSI. BBQ and treats
<u>Sun. 1 July</u>	9.15 am. Auckland Council Planting Day. BBQ provided.
<u>Sun. 5 August</u>	9.15 am. Auckland Council Planting Day. BBQ provided.

## Chairman's Report

2012 is TOSSI's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary so it is pleasing to see the year start with such significant events as a further AITW and the translocation of saddleback to Tawharanui Open sanctuary. Both events require the cooperation of many participants which has made TOSSI's first 10 years so successful.

Once again the AITW was a very successful event that not only has made a major contribution to our finances but also gives important exposure for both TOSSI and the Tawharanui open Sanctuary. Alison Stanes was responsible for this year's show but would not have succeeded without the efforts of numerous volunteers, both TOSSI and non TOSSI, together with park staff. Thank you to this group for their efforts.

Likewise the saddleback translocation will represent the efforts of many. We are grateful to Kevin Parker for leading the translocation, which has involved significant planning and permitting. He has had a very skilled group of experienced bird netters, including Massey students, park staff and other volunteers. However this group represents only those involved in the translocation of saddleback and I would like to acknowledge all those who have been involved over the past 10 years establishing the Tawharanui Open Sanctuary and contributing to its pest free status. The translocation would not have occurred without the efforts of fence monitors and trapline checkers. The translocation is confirmation of the success of the Tawharanui Open Sanctuary and TOSSI's contribution to it. I would also like to acknowledge the generous financial support of Bird Life Community Conservation Fund, NZ National Parks and Conservation Fund, Chris Patterson Barrister, Auckland Council and TOSSI through such events as AITW. If 2012 continues as it has TOSSI will have had a very successful start to its second 10 years. Steve Palmer



## Endangered Plants

Often the major satisfaction of a conservation project arises from the translocation of threatened fauna particularly our unique birds. However it is important also to remember the uniqueness of our flora with numerous endemic genera and species. Unfortunately a number of these are under as great a threat of extinction as are our birds and reptiles.

The major flora focus at Tawharanui is the preservation of remaining species and allowing for regeneration with the help of our yearly plantings. Weed control is another important aspect of maintenance of native floral species. We have begun to think of lost species and the potential for plant translocations back into Tawharanui.

Our first attempted plant translocation has been with green mistletoe, *Ileostylus micranthus*. Of the nine species of New Zealand mistletoe one, the yellow mistletoe, is now extinct while both the spectacular red mistletoes are under threat. A major cause of the loss of mistletoe has been possum for whom the mistletoe is a favoured food. Loss of forest birds has also contributed to the decline as birds are the usual means of flower pollination and seed dispersal.

The green mistletoe is not regarded as being threatened but is uncommon in the Rodney district, hence our attempt at translocation of this species. The seeds of mistletoe are present in a capsule which when removed leaves a seed covered in a sticky secretion. This secretion allows the seed to be placed on a terminal axil of the host plant, in this case a totara. Although attachment is easy, germination is less predictable and only a small percentage of seeds will eventually form a small plant that parasitises the host tree. Success depends on a fresh supply of viable seed.

Our first attempt at translocation of green mistletoe has resulted in one slow growing plant and after one year the plant is about 3cm in size. This will not be sufficient to reintroduce green mistletoe to the park as mistletoe are dioecious, meaning that separate male and female plants are required for viable seed production. Further seeding will therefore be carried out this autumn. Once established mistletoe will provide another food source for our increasing bird population and these birds in turn will help spread further seed. Steve Palmer

## Open Sanctuary Coordinator Update

Congratulations to TOSSI reaching the significant milestone of your 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary! The strength and value of this community partnership is seen everyday on the park: the pest proof fence; thriving nursery and growing forests; rehabilitated wetlands and new boardwalks; and recovering and returning wildlife. Working alongside the TOSSI committee, project leaders and members is a hugely rewarding and enjoyable part of my role. Together we have achieved far more than we ever could alone.



The return of tieke is another hugely significant milestone for the open sanctuary. For those of us fortunate enough to visit them, the saddleback is the sound track of many offshore islands (the day shift anyway, seabirds take over at night). The return of this noisy and obvious bird is in many ways a coming of age for the sanctuary. That we can contemplate reintroducing this incredibly predator vulnerable species speaks volumes about the confidence we and others have in the environment we have created. However, nothing is certain and only time will tell the success of this project.

A recent introduction that challenged my senses somewhat was the deliberate import of six white laboratory Norway rats. Why? With the imminent arrival of tieke we wanted to be sure that the release area was indeed free of predators. 'Lure rats' have been mooted as a potentially more sensitive tool than traditional traps or tracking tunnels to help find invaders or survivors in pest eradicated areas. Key to this is these animals are hard wired to locate competitors, predators and potential mates. The good news is that our six caged rats had no visitors during their two week stay. A bonus was the opportunity to test the nose of rodent detection dog 'Waia' in a blind test. All six caged animals were found, a pleasing result as unlike a real invader these animals were plonked in the forest in their cages, with no scent trail on the ground.

Freshwater fish are an often overlooked part of our ecology, until whitebait season that is, and even then most are unaware their fritter is made of native and sometimes threatened species. A recent survey of the Ecology Stream was undertaken to see how fish have fared since the installation of the stockwater dam in the late 80's, especially the giant kokupu for which a single record was known prior to damming. The length of the stream was trapped using many live capture Gee minnow traps and Fyke nets baited with cheese (other fishy folk use Marmite as bait and are quite distressed by the current shortage). Results showed lots of banded kokupu (some of the highest catch per unit effort results seen by this team), both short and long finned eels, koura, inanga and common bully. Unfortunately no sign of the giants we sought but a good baseline against which to contemplate fish community restoration.

The war on weeds continues with contractors abselling the North Coast cliffs tackling boneseed that lies beyond the reach of our volunteers and staff. This project is funded by TOSSI and Auckland Council as an extension to the weed programme.

Our kakariki are breeding! Two nestlings were found on the ground in Ecology Bush, one unfortunately dead. It was presumed they had either fallen or been pushed from a nest overhead. The chick was fed on the ground by parents for ten days before eventually shuffling out of camera view, presumably to lead a productive life.

Autumn is upon us with another 20,000 quality TOSSI grown trees awaiting us. I hope to see you in a paddock with a spade creating wildlife habitat over the coming months.

Kind regards,

Matt Maitland I can be contacted at [matt.maitland@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](mailto:matt.maitland@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz) or 09 426 1200



Wild life artist Nicholas Wilson created a limited edition of 30 etchings to commemorate the return of the tieke to Tawharanui, available through TOSSI \$45.

Drama Queen a children's book about a New Zealand dotterel that lives at Tawharanui is also available through TOSSI \$20.



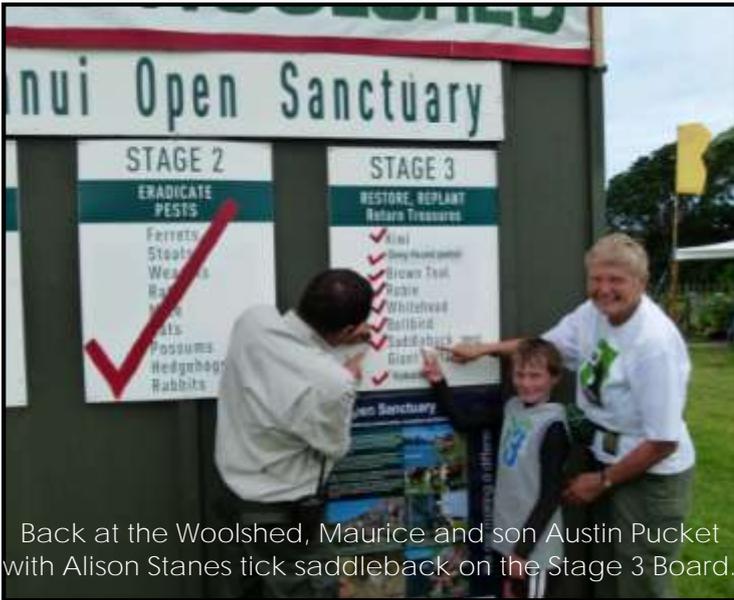
Saddleback arrive at Tawharanui



March 10 on the first day of Art in the Woolshed, the helicopter arrives at Tawharanui from Lady Alice Island (Hen and Chicken Islands) with 30 saddleback.



"Aren't we glad to be out of those boxes?"



Back at the Woolshed, Maurice and son Austin Pucket with Alison Stanes tick saddleback on the Stage 3 Board.



March 26 after delays caused by the weather, 30 saddleback arrive from Red Mercury Island.



In 1966 John Kendrick with Geoff Moon and Don Merton made the first translocation of saddleback from Hen Island to Red Mercury. In this photo John Kendrick watches carefully as later generations of the birds from Red Mercury are released at Tawharanui.



As boxes were opened saddleback zoomed off into the park at Tokatu Point. One can be seen between Maurice's legs. 100 roost boxes and 30 nesting boxing will be installed at Tawharanui to help saddleback settle in.

## Tieke return to Tawharanui Open Sanctuary!

Tieke are back on the Auckland mainland after approximately 150 years. Where did they go? Well, the usual suspects – fur and teeth. Reduced to a single population (Hen/ Taranga Is), NI tieke are a conservation success story, with 5-10,000 birds now on 15 islands and three mainland sites. It epitomises two key NZ conservation tools: use and creation of pest free refuges and translocation of at risk species.

We know we should always try to maximise the genetic diversity of species we work with. Translocations only capture a proportion of the total diversity at the source site and subsequent translocations compound this. This 'bottlenecking' can also occur from habitat fragmentation, predation or disease. Sourcing birds from three different populations tests the practicality of combining a variety of genetic backgrounds. The benefits of this lie in strengthening genetic fitness and overall population health. Put simply, will these birds, with different song, be willing to pair and breed?

Once all paperwork and permits are in hand, team through quarantine and landed on the island, there are a few steps to work through before birds arrive at Tawharanui.

1. Prepare aviary to hold 30 birds between capture and transfer. In this case we renovated an historic NZ Wildlife Service aviary used for tieke transfers in the 80's. Aviary prep includes making sure no gaps exist, filling it with plenty of shrubbery to provide cover and roosts, and providing protection from wind and rain.

2. Catch birds. In teams we set ultrafine mistnets in likely spots (flyways, territories identified by calling birds) and then seek to lure birds in by playing saddleback song. Some birds respond straight away, others couldn't give a .... Every opportunity to catch birds is taken with teams working down til dusk, packing up and down and shifting at the whim of the rain, wind and birds.

3. Process birds. Captured birds are placed in cloth holding bags and transported to a central site. Kevin takes weights and measures, blood and other samples and fits metal and colour bands for identification.

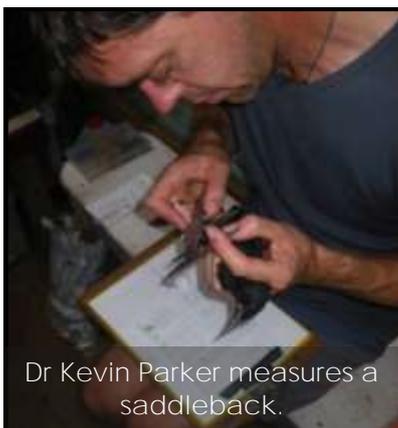
4. Maintain birds in aviary. Hazel was up each day before dawn to mix liquid foods, chop fruit, prepare jam mix and serve up saddleback cake. Then hump it over the hill to the aviary which is half an hours trek on steep and slippery tracks. Bring back dirty dishes and sterilise. Repeat in evening.

5. Prepare birds for transfer. Carefully remove all aviary shrubbery. Hand net birds and place in capture bags, triple knotted for security. As the helicopter could only land back on the hut side of the island via slippery tracks we decided best transport method was to slide catch bags on to mist net poles for carriage. Once on the other side birds were quickly weighed, colour bands checked and placed six to a box with orange quarters for energy and moisture whilst in transit.

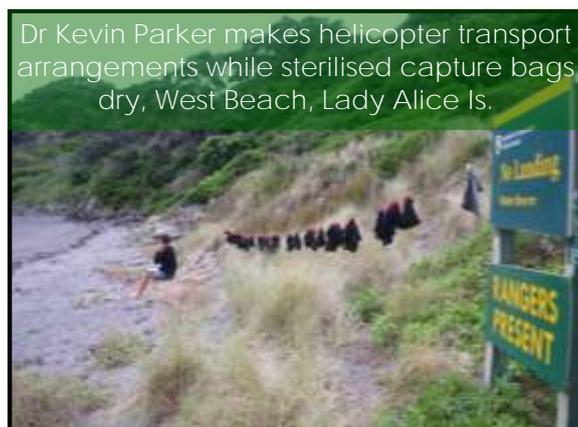
6. Transfer and release birds. Load boxes onto helicopter and fly to Tawharanui. Unload boxes, carry into bush, open doors, observe birds in new home and beaming faces of TOSSI members and supporters.

Job well done? Not quite, there's still a team on the island waiting to boat off, unload gear, travel home, clean gear and prep for next two island transfers. Are we there yet? Uh-unhh, now we must monitor the birds to see how they settle into their new homes and who pairs with who and breeds. Remember the question about recombining genetics? Well, that may take several breeding seasons to answer. In the meantime, get out to Tokatu point and enjoy the sound of tieke at Tawharanui.

Matt Maitland Open Sanctuary Coordinator



Dr Kevin Parker measures a saddleback.



Dr Kevin Parker makes helicopter transport arrangements while sterilised capture bags dry, West Beach, Lady Alice Is.



Matiū Mataira and saddleback



In the Sculpture Garden Marti Wong's "Where's the Ice" aroused much interest.



James Wright unloads "Weta Punga" from the back of his truck.



Fantail by Cheryl Wright.  
In the background is "Energy"  
by Lauren Kitts.



Lawn Mower Moa by Marti Wong



The Great Plains by Rebecca Rose.



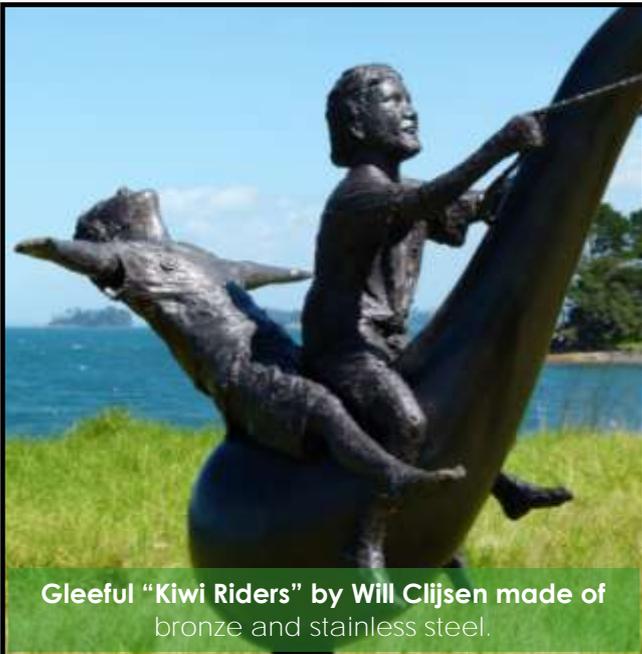
Inside the Woolshed Gallery.



Visitors amble down the avenue of trees, viewing art works of kiwi, fantail, tui, and live bellbirds during a passing shower



The TOSSI Tent with unwanted pests and weeds, and natives to be nurtured was very successful.



Gleeful "Kiwi Riders" by Will Clijssen made of bronze and stainless steel.



"A beautiful vision" by Danny Wright. This kiwi sculpture welcomed visitors to the avenue of trees.



Children enjoy "Tea Break" by Trevor Nathan.



Volunteers Ross and Kay promote raffle sales. These were won by - Chris, Jan Galloway, Jocelyn Whyte and Natalie Aitken.

## December 5 Sunday in the park

Enthusiastic teams led by Alison Stanes and Sue Crawshay headed to the dunes for the satisfying job of removing lupins. Ray Blackburn led the rest of the group to work on the track leading up from the Mangatawhiri wetland to the west end track.

Our speaker was Mike Wilcox who not only talked the group through a power point series of Tawharanui seaweed pictures but also went to the trouble to go out to Anchor Bay before his presentation and gather specimens of the typical algae of the area and show them to the volunteers. There are several species in the area that are apparently previously unidentified native plants not found elsewhere in the region or perhaps in NZ

## February 5 Sunday in the Park

55 people came out to enjoy a work day with the host Joe Crandle as well as a bit of exercise and fresh air at Tawharanui, followed by the usual sausage sizzle and a presentation by one of the scientists using the park as a resource for their studies. This included a group of a dozen Korean young ladies who included this event in their trip to New Zealand to enable them to interact with the local populace here.

The old lagoon bridge was removed now replaced by a new walkway which links up with the Coastal walk. A team lead by Roger Williams and Ray Blackburn soon demolished the superstructure. Only the existing piles now remain to be removed or cut off by the rangers. The nursery saw over 700 plants bagged into PV3 containers by a group of Paul Williams's experienced staff helping recent volunteers who needed to be trained in the proper technique of re-potting the seedlings from tubes to ensure the survival of healthy specimens to be used during this winter's planting days. Alison Stanes had her weeding crew in the dunes on a fleabane removal mission. Patte Williams took some of the Korean ladies into the dunes to help weed while the rest of the group worked in the nursery. Steve Palmer had a group releasing the recently planted new species in the Mangatawhiri wetlands from the clutches of the vinous weeds that threatened to choke their growth.

The sausage sizzle lunch was, as usual, prepared by Elizabeth Harrison, ably assisted by Maggie Cornish and her sister Helen visiting from the Ottawa. A new supplier, The Farm Butchery in Warkworth, was the source of the meat. This change was well received by the hungry masses.

After lunch, Chris Wedding, who studies New Zealand lizards, including both skinks and geckoes, gave the volunteers an overview of the huge variety of these reptiles that are unique to NZ and which occupy an amazing variety of unlikely habitats. A census is planned for later this year of the population of these animals in the Tawharanui sanctuary as well as in several other parks in the Auckland Council region.

## March 4 Sunday in the Park

On Saturday 3 March, In preparation for Art in the Woolshed wallboards were transported from the storage area in the park ranger's garage space into the newly cleaned woolshed. A small group of volunteers promptly moved the heavy material into the woolshed as well as erected the Council marquee for the sausage sizzle.

Thirty five volunteers came on Sunday morning to be greeted by a bright sunny day. Led by some of the previous Art in the Woolshed building crew, and following mysterious plans drawn on the previous wallboard sections, the lining was soon screwed into place with the interior space being transformed into a gallery suitable to hang this year's featured art. The painters followed closely behind covering the seams and repainting the surfaces to yield a gleaming white surface.

The usual sausage sizzle followed and the volunteers made good use of the new picnic tables delivered by the Auckland Council to the park during the previous week. These tables were manufactured for all of the Northern Parks this year but Tawharanui had the first use during Art in the Woolshed. The appearance of the interior of the building has been remarkably transformed but the odour of a well used woolshed remains firmly in place. Sunday in the Park Reports by Steve Harrison

## Art in the Woolshed 10-18 March 2012

The sixth Art in the woolshed brought streams of visitors to Tawharanui Open Sanctuary. The Woolshed hummed with people delighted at the pleasing presentation set up with a professional flare by artist Tineke Wilde. However, a tightening economy, inclement weather and regular customers with homes full of art, or scaling down of possessions, slowed sales. A hard earned profit of \$25,000 profit was achieved by passionate volunteers.

This exhibition provided a wide range of stunning art pieces, from landscape to contemporary, ceramics, photography and sculpture. For the first time there were subtle statements about climate change. Jane Galloway's series "There is no Planet B" displayed birds flying among jet streams, wind farms and intensive housing with not a tree in sight. Marti Wong produced a Polar Bear made from washing machine bowls with the title "Where's all the ice?" and Rosemary Dobson's three fried eggs titled "Frying the Future." All provided a powerful reminder of serious future global change.

Thanks go out to everybody who assisted to make the Art in the Woolshed possible. Firstly thank you to the Auckland Council for support and assistance with marquees, new kitchen steps, wall boards, picnic tables, power leads and permitting TOSSI to use the woolshed.

A big thank you goes to all the artists, especially James Wight for managing the sculpture and Tineke Wilde who directed the hanging of art works in the Woolshed. A huge thank you goes to the committed team who rebuilt the Woolshed and painted it and then those who returned to dismantle it. Stacks of fibre board, shop display stands and artist plinths were transported back to a storage garage between squalls of heavy rain.

Appreciation goes to Pate Williams for organising the on going dedicated volunteer team who manned the galleries, the TOSSI tent, the entrance, artists shop and the sculpture garden. Thanks to all those who gave up time to help. Thank you also to Pate and Roger for the flag display. And a big thank you to Elizabeth and Steve Harrison for managing the successful beginning and after events.

Enormous thanks goes to those TOSSI volunteers who remained on site throughout the exhibition, my twin Heather Smith who became my slave, Sue Hoyle our AITW accountant, Kay McGlashan and Ross Turner, and Jenny and Jim McGlashan who managed the artists shop and night security. Rewards came as we wallowed in the sea, on sunny late afternoons, in glorious isolation, in an idyllic pohutukawa clad bay on the south coast. Other nights the debrief took place with a glass of wine accompanied by a cacophony of Tawharanui bird song. Throughout the exhibition the melodious call of bellbirds rang out with a chime of three notes, a song mainly heard in March and not the rest of the year, a repetitive thank you chorus for all our efforts.  
Alison Stanes Art Coordinator.

### Nursery Workers Celebrate

The nursery workers have good reason to celebrate. Not only have they reached 100,000 trees this month but it is also a surprise Birthday party for Paul Williams their esteemed leader. He is known to say , "habitat, habitat and habitat. Habitat is everything."

If you want to join this committed team, who socialise with home made goodies most Tuesdays Phone Paul 425,9877.

Now is the season for planting. Please come and help plant trees. See the front cover for dates.



Paul is greeted by a surprise Birthday Party.



100,000 trees achieved since the nursery opened in 2007.

## Art in the Woolshed Behind the Scenes

Organising an art exhibition in a working woolshed requires a mobile office. At Matakana I purchased \$100 prepay cell phone voucher in preparation. At Tawharanui I had trouble getting cell phone signal to install the numbers so put the voucher in my pocket. My pants got paint on them while we painted the woolshed so they were hand washed immediately along with the \$100 prepay cell phone voucher! 'Hicks Ups' continued! The pen drive with the Tawharanui slide show was loose in the back of the TV and somehow dropped through the holding pen slats into the sheep droppings below. An intrepid Kate Mc Connell kindly retrieved it. In a busy moment I put it in my pocket. Later it was destroyed in a washing machine.

The TOSSI sun umbrellas were stored under the shearing platform with display boards locking them in. We thought we would not need them. Plans changed and they were required for the Sculpture Garden. Young Austin Puckett the Resident Ranger's son kindly crawled in under the stairs and fed out an umbrella, going back a second time for the base. He wriggled out draped all over with a thick net of dusty cobwebs and smiled with satisfaction at managing the challenge.

Extra lighting in the woolshed strained the system. When the Coffee Kitchen turned on his oven the Holding pen Gallery lights went out. The Coffee Kitchen kindly resorted to using a generator.

On the first weekend rain created a balloon of water in the TOSSI tent right above the Nurture Nature display. It took four adults to lift from underneath to drain it. On the day after the exhibition closed, a storm created large puddles everywhere including some that drained into the shop marquee. Kay McGlashan and Sam Hall used a deep fresh rain water puddle inside the shop marquee to wash their hands after removing muddy pins that held down the display boards. After the marquees were removed the field was a mosaic of worn grass, puddles and lush tall grass that had grown under the tables in the shop marquee. A large flock of sea gulls arrived to feed in the lake like ponds on the site as I drove away from the scene. Art in the Woolshed has always been held in March because of the stable weather patterns. Over the last nine years and five art exhibitions, the fan in the woolshed gallery has furiously turned to keep it cool. In 2010 the Council renewed the old wobbly fan for safety purposes. This year it was not even turned on. Whether the change in weather this year was linked to climate change or not, it certainly was different. Alison Stanes



Maurice Puckett arrives with a load of soil to fill a hole in the TOSSI Tent.



Heather Smith calls for more man power to help drain the balloon of water off the TOSSI Tent roof.

## Tenth Anniversary Ceremony for TOSSI with the Auckland Council

In conjunction with the opening of this year's Art in the Woolshed on March 10, 2012, a private function held adjacent to the Exhibition at the woolshed was jointly sponsored by Auckland Council and Tawharanui Open Sanctuary Society Inc. Sixty people who have been involved with the formation and continuing development of the Sanctuary at this Regional Park in Rodney District near Matakana gathered to mark the ten years since TOSSI was incorporated in 2002. Brief presentations to the group were made by Steve Palmer, TOSSI's current Chairman; Penny Webster, Auckland Council member; Tracey Martin, Rodney Local Board member and Member of Parliament; Matt Maitland, Open Sanctuary Coordinator; Les Cave, TOSSI Chairman during many of the formative years; Maurice Puckett, Resident Ranger; and Alison Stanes, longtime Committee Member and Organizer of this Art in the Woolshed. The TOSSI Committee gave Alison a book *New Zealand's Native Trees* by John Dawson and Rob Lucas, in recognition of her work at the park. The event was catered by the Auckland Council Civic Events Team and wine was supplied by two of the consistent TOSSI supporters, Ransom Wines of Warkworth and Banrock Station Wines from Australia.

Another tenth year celebration for TOSSI members will be held during the two day Queen's Birthday Holiday weekend June 2 and 3 along with the usual Bar-B-Qs on these two planting days. This, of course, means cake and ice cream as an additional reward for our members as well as the other folks helping in this important work. The International Student Volunteers will also be on hand for the digging and eating activities this Saturday and Sunday. Steve Harrison



Volunteer trap lines are available to suit all abilities and commitments. You can adopt a line or be part of a roster. Full training is given. Contact James at [jamesrosss@paradise.net.nz](mailto:jamesrosss@paradise.net.nz) for more information.



This kakariki chick left the nest a little early although parents continued to feed it in Ecology Bush. A surveillance camera watched it till it was big enough to move away.



A bud emerges from the sticky rare and endangered mistletoe seed purposely stuck to a totara.



A recent photo shows the bud has developed into leaves.



New TOSSI display panels can be seen at Anchor Bay, in the Camp Ground and in the Info Koru.



The day after Art in the Woolshed a storm produced ponds across the green.



Art in the Woolshed March 2012

We acknowledge with grateful thanks Warkworth Printing Ltd. for their assistance with the printing of this newsletter. Warkworth Printing Phone 425 7188. Email: [sales@warkworthprinting.co.nz](mailto:sales@warkworthprinting.co.nz)