

Please diary TOSSI's volunteer workdays.

Sunday 4 October

Sunday 1 November a special induction
workday for new volunteers.
Lunch provided. Bring a friend.

Sunday 6 December



TOSSI dinner at Ransom Vineyard
Saturday 17 October
See page 15 for more details.

Save these dates!
Art in the Woolshed
6 to 14 March 2010

TAWHARANUI OPEN SANCTUARY SOCIETY INC.

Newsletter No. 30. September 2009

This grey faced petrel chick was photographed at Tawharanui. It was discovered in a nesting burrow on the North Coast, causing great excitement! Over the last few years numerous attempts by staff and volunteers have meant sitting out in the dark for hours with no petrel calls being heard. Recording devices left out for a week this season have given better results. Read page two for more information.



Grey faced petrels are a large pelagic ocean wander capable of going 770 kilometres off shore. It is one of about a 100 species of tubenose divided among four families. Albatross, shearwaters, prions and petrels. The chicks are incubated by both parents for a period of 50 days. Grey faced petrels feed at night on zooplankton and probably fluorescent organisms. They are big birds with dark plumage, and grey face.



Photos Dept. of Conservation

Tawharanui Open Sanctuary is a joint project with Auckland Regional Council.

We acknowledge with grateful thanks Warkworth Printing Ltd. for this assistance in printing this newsletter. Warkworth Printing Phone 425 7188 Email: sales@warkworthprinting.co.nz



Coming Events

Sunday 4 October Volunteer Workday. Meet at the Woolshed 9.15 am for morning tea.

Saturday 17 October TOSSI dinner at Ransom Vineyard. See page 15 for details.

Sunday 1 November Meet at the Woolshed at 9.15. am. A special induction workday for new volunteers. Regular volunteers bring along a friend who might be interested! Talks about the park, barbecue lunch provided and easy tasks to follow.

Sunday 6 December Volunteer Workday. Meet at the Woolshed at 9.15 am.

December. Seabird Field Trip. See page 15 for details.

Art in the Woolshed 6 to 14 March 2010.



Chairman's Review

The signs of spring weather are very evident in the park at present - young lambs and calves, bird courtship activity, new growth on plants, flowering kowhai, kiwis incubating and increasing visitor numbers. It's a very nice time of year and I hope you have the time to enjoy the many attractions the park has to offer.

Thank you to those members and supporters who attended our seventh AGM and workday earlier this month. We welcomed Steve Harrison to our committee and reluctantly farewell Helen Crosby. Steve will be known to many of you through his regular work in the park. Helen was elected to the committee in 2005 and immediately took on the job of newsletter editor (until 2007) and in 2008 was elected Deputy Chair. I will miss her advice and support at committee level but we are lucky she is organising Art in the Woolshed Tawharanui 2010, following on from her success with AITW 2008.

Our membership renewals are flowing in, together with many generous donations. Thank you - we really appreciate your support. Please encourage others to join TOSSI; alternatively you can take the initiative and sign them up by using our gift membership option. While on financial matters, if you would like a copy of our audited financial statements for the year ended 30th June 2009 please email our Treasurer, Joe Crandle, on secretary@tossi.org.nz and he will post a copy to you. Our appreciation goes to BDO Spicers, Auckland, for conducting the audit.

Matt Maitland has reported a grey-faced petrel burrow and a chick at Tokatu Point, a welcome return and without any translocation help from us (except for providing a safe haven of course). It's interesting to reflect on a report by Jo Ritchie in TOSSI's first newsletter (July 2002) that "grey-faced petrels were seen to be nest prospecting out at Tokatu Point". The good work that the ARC and TOSSI have done is paying off with more bird species recognizing that Tawharanui Open Sanctuary is an ideal spot to live and raise a family.



Remember, the success of TOSSI and the sanctuary is a direct result of your input. Let's keep the momentum going. Paul Williams Chairperson

Some of the TOSSI committee. David Stone, Steve Palmer, Paul Williams, Steve Harrison, Joe Crandle. Missing from the photo are James Ross, Sharon Kast, Jan Halliday and Alison Stanes.

From the Editor

There are always exciting things happening at Tawharanui. This thirtieth newsletter is celebrated with some reminiscing as well as the arrival of a grey faced petrel chick. I remember waiting in the dark and the cold at Tokatu Point with Jo Richie the project manager at the time and returning disappointed with not hearing anything. Again I waited at Elephant Point with Tim Lovegrove from the ARC Heritage and a team, without any signs of Grey faced petrels. So it is indeed exciting news that there is a chick this season, and in the future there may be many pelagic birds tempted to nest on Tawharanui's coastal cliffs, now free of mammalian predators.

Alison Stanes Editor

Open Sanctuary Coordinator Update



We're very excited to have a new species in the Open Sanctuary. The discovery of Oi (grey faced petrel) around the Tokatu headland came about from the trial of a bio-acoustic monitoring device intended for deployment on Hauraki Gulf islands later this year. When downloading data, volunteer Chris Gaskin was excited to hear the distinctive call of Oi amongst the kiwi, morepork and other night sounds. A ground based survey confirmed this species showing great interest in the headland. Further searching in habitat that looked 'seabirdy', combined with a distinctive petrel scent led to a burrow from which peeping could be heard. This was confirmed as grey faced petrel when a 3 week old oily downy chick tried to peck an exploratory hand.

The return of seabirds is more than just adding another species to Tawharanui. Petrels and other seabirds were once present throughout mainland New Zealand in their tens of millions. Each night returning birds would import marine nutrients via deposition of guano on the land near their burrows. This accumulated nutrient is the basis of most of our terrestrial fertility, sustaining our native forests, and more recently (geologically speaking) our farmland. Introduced mammalian predators are the primary cause of the loss of these birds, most of which are now restricted to offshore islands. Their reappearance at Tawharanui heralds the beginning of the restoration of this fundamentally damaged ecological process.

Another notable arrival was two male hihi (stitchbird) observed in late June. Presumably blown in from Haururu/Little Barrier Island, it's great to know that we can provide the safety from predators these birds need if they stick around following such chance arrivals. Clearly two males does not a population make, but with time others of their species may arrive and establish. Both hihi and oi show that even five years after pests are removed we can be pleasantly surprised by what turns up next.

Spring is always a marvellous time on the park. Clematis, manuka and kowhai are the notable flowering plants heralding the change of season. Two male kiwi are again incubating, with hatch expected late this month. The first pateke chick for the season has been sighted, with luck there'll be plenty more of these to come. Our last release of pateke next February will consolidate the establishment of this threatened species.

Popokatea (whitehead) are present throughout the park, with many unbanded birds seen. These unbanded birds are local bred and evidence of successful recruitment. Robins too are breeding. Four of eight pair identified are on nests already. Although very productive, fledging 33 and 34 young in each of the last two seasons, not all have been recruited into the population. If only they knew the dangers beyond the fence they might not be so keen to disperse and explore the world.

Those of you following progress on the 'super city' will have seen the debate on the Auckland Council's northern boundary unfold in recent weeks. In response to submissions the government has decided northern regional boundary will remain unchanged and thus our Tawharanui work programme will continue as planned. On 1 November 2010 all assets and relationships of ARC will transfer to the new Auckland Council. I will keep you informed as this story unfolds.

Matt Maitland Open Sanctuary Coordinator
I can be contacted at matt.maitland@arc.govt.nz or 09 426 1200



Newsletter number 30 highlights a successful partnership between TOSSI and ARC

- 2002 Tawharanui Open Sanctuary inaugural meeting chaired by ARC Councillor Bill Burrill in the Woolshed.
- 2002- 2005 TOSSI Newsletter Editors Rhys and Shelia Thompson
- 2002- 2006 Project Manager Jo Ritchie
- 2002 Tawharanui Open Sanctuary Incorporated Society Constitution signed.
- 2002 Memorandum Agreement with ARC signed.
- 2002 First Newsletter speaks of establishing an Incorporated society and building a predator proof fence. Cost of \$580,000. \$200,000 received from the lotteries Environment and Heritage Fund, \$200,000 from ARC. **\$12,000 from World Wide Fund for Nature's Habitat Protection Fund. TOSSI to find \$172,000.**
- 2002- 2006 TOSSI Chairperson Hamish Alexander.
- 2002- Predator Proof Fence started.
- 2003 First Art in the Woolshed Exhibition. Barry Lett Curator.
- 2003 Unveiling of the Pou beside the lagoon.
- 2003 Orca stranded and saved at Anchor Bay.
- 2004 Big Plant ARC and TOSSI. Planted the first section of the Bull Sidling, with plants from Wenderholm and 2004 Paremoremo Prison. Also planted the paharakeke garden.
- 2004 Second Art in the Woolshed. Alison Stanes co-ordinator.
- 2004 Predator Proof fence completed, and two helicopter drops of bait targeting mammalian predators.
- 2005- 2007 TOSSI Newsletter Editor Helen Crosby
- 2005 Big Plant ARC and TOSSI Planted the second section of the Bull Sidling, plants from Wenderholm and ARC.
- 2005 Planting beside the Anchor Bay road after the camp ground gate.
- 2005 Planted the second section of the Lagoon Wetland.
- 2005 Pohutukawas planted at Anchor Bay car park.
- 2005 Forest geckos and green geckos from the construction of the Northern Motorway extension are saved and released in Possum Gully and Ecology Bush.
- 2005 Bellbirds observed returning to Tawharanui, most likely from Little Barrier.
- 2006 Third Art in the Woolshed Exhibition. Alison Stanes co-ordinator.
- 2006– 2008 TOSSI Chairperson Les Cave.
- 2006 Hayters paddock beside the camp ground road is reinstated as a Wetland. Project Manager Les Cave.
- 2006 Hayters Wetland Planted. Plants grown by TOSSI volunteers in Chittenden's Shade House.**
- 2006 Pohutukawas planted beside the road to the camp ground.
- 2006- 2007 North Island Brown Kiwi 44 released through the Bank of NZ Operation Nest Egg Programme.
- 2007 Open Sanctuary Coordinator for the Northern Sector Matt Maitland, starts with ARC.
- 2007 Peters Paddock is reinstated as Mangatawhiri wetlands. Project Manager Les Cave.
- 2007 Official opening of the TOSSI nursery at Tawharanui. Nursery Manager Paul Williams.
- 2007 First planting of Mangatawhiri Wetland. Also planted between the camp ground and Anchor Bay.
- 2007 North Island robin released. 21 from Tiritiri Matangi and 4 from Puhoi.
- 2007 Whiteheads are released. 45 from Tiritiri Matangi.
- 2007 NZ dotterels fledge seventeen chicks a significant increase from one chick fledged in 2003.
- 2007-2010 TOSSI Newsletter Editor Alison Stanes
- 2008 Fourth Art in the Woolshed Exhibition. Helen Crosby co-ordinator.
- 2008 Shore Skinks left Tawharanui destined for Tiritiri Matangi.
- 2008 –2009 kaka regularly visiting Tawharanui and first confirmed breeding in the Ecology Bush.
- 2008- 2009 Pateke releases totalling 84 from the Pateke captive breeding program to Tawharanui. Project supported by Wetland Care NZ and funding from Banrock Station Wines.
- 2008- 2010 TOSSI Chairperson and Nursery Manager Paul Williams.
- 2008 Apple of Sodom removed from the dunes.
- 2008 Stock shelters planted through out the park.
- 2008 Final Mangatawhiri wetland planting. Planting at Anchor Bay and stream edge of Road Flat paddock.
- 2009 First kiwi chicks hatch at Tawharanui.
- 2009 Shore Skinks left Tawharanui destined for Motuihe.
- 2009 Kakariki release, red crowned 24 from Little Barrier.
- 2009 First TOSSI Plant for two days, Twin Hills Gullies. Also West End Race. Plant Co-ordinator Steve Palmer.
- 2009 Grey-faced petrel confirmed breeding at Ngaio Bay.
- 2010 Fifth Art in the Woolshed. Helen Crosby co-ordinator.



2002 Started the predator proof fence.



Preparing for the predator proof fence.



2003 The culvert and bund are put in place for the predator proof fence.



2004 The bait drop



2004 The fence is completed.



2005 The big dig reinstating Hayter's Wetland next to the camp ground road.



Planting Hayter's wetland in the rain.



2005 Clean up in preparation for building the nursery.



2006 The TOSSI nursery is under construction.



2007 Reinstating Mangatawhiri Wetland.



2007 The TOSSI nursery is officially opened.

June 10 Volunteer Workday



We started with ten keen adults on a fine day and the force grew to eighteen as we fronted up to a steep slope on Twin Hills. The first challenge was that many of the plants were not on site, and even when they arrived they had to be carried to the top of the slope where the real work began getting them down the slope. I suspect those who normally do this contrived the situation to let the rest of us learn just how much yakka is involved! And fair enough too. Colin Sargent was prepared with a sledge, a wooden frame with two car leaf springs for runners, and lots of rope. It was good for the downhill parts but a bit heavy to drag back up. Someone decided to drag the crates of plants down the slope with a rope and that worked reasonably to

the level where the slope is heavily terraced. We left for lunch with 480 plants in the ground. Not a big planting day but a good result from a small group soon after the Big Planting days.

It left me thinking about the whole effort it takes to get the plants in the ground. The seed collecting, the setting up of the nursery, its operation involving many people and regular work days, the funding for it, preparing the planting sites, and organising the planting days, putting the plants out ... The planting is really like putting the icing on the cake!

Joe Crandle Workday host



July 5 Volunteer Workday

The biggest thank you goes to a small team of committed volunteers who gave every ounce of energy to have the satisfaction of seeing the job finished. Healthy plants heading above a carpet of flattened weeds. Four student monitors on the park also helped. Thanks goes to Chloe MacLaren, Elizabeth Walker, Louise Reynolds and Anna Grief for without their input we may not have finished. The job was to clear weeds from the west race plantings beside the stream. Prime target was apple of sodom which we removed from the site. Also we dealt to ink weed, prickly ox tongue, scotch thistles, woolly night shade deadly night shade and ragwort. There was great rejoicing each time a healthy kahikatea turned up from under the weed cover and a competition evolved as to who could find the biggest.



No matter how much the host for the day is prepared, unforeseen events have to be managed! First, the key to the TOSSI kitchen cupboard has completely vanished! So tea and coffee were stolen from other sources.

Second, when the mule driven by Steve Palmer, loaded with tools and people arrived at the worksite, a terrible hiss greeted us as a back tyre collapsed. Matt Maitland returned to find no spare on the park. He brought out a trailer to transport the mule back but it was soon discovered that the mule was too wide for the trailer. After we finished the job we headed out leaving a forlorn mule lone in the paddock.

Third, a student's car had stopped dead on the farm track blocking our path to lunch. We tried to jump start it and then pushed it out of the way and finally towed it back to the vol hole. We were well ready for lunch by two o'clock. Last of all, Sheila Jenkins very cleverly crossed the small muddy wetland stream leaving behind a gumboot either side and landing up on the bank in her socks!

Alison Stanes Workday host.

August 2 Volunteer Workday

The August workday was the fourth of our major planting days for 2009. Remarkably we enjoyed another fine day so that our planting during 2009 was virtually rain free. Follow up rain however has helped water the plants. Again we had the help of a large turnout of around 70 volunteers. CVNZ had worked hard not only to lift the crates over the fence but also to distribute them down the hill. The nursery group who turned up on the Friday prior to the planting, were very relieved to see the crates spaced down the hill. The success of this years planting owes a lot to the CVNZ and the nursery group who help have the plants in place before planting begins.

A little less than 3000 trees were planted filling the area after the Queen's Birthday workday. We have now planted approximately a third of the proposed Twin Hills area. Thanks to all those who helped with this planting and for the support from ARC. The drinks and nibbles delivered by Laura and Austin Puckett and their helpers were very much appreciated. Likewise the efforts of Elizabeth and Dorothy in preparing lunch did not go unnoticed.

One tends to think of the benefits of planting in the long term so it is pleasing to hear reports of bitten being seen in the wetland of this planting. This years plantings will approach a total of 20,000 plants. Apart from our four big days other plantings have been done by CVNZ and the Lions. A month after the first three planting in Twin Hills I had the opportunity to use the CVNZ group to do a formal count of plant survival. Lost plants were less than 25% and even now survival looks to be above 95%. Thank you again to all those who have helped with this years planting and we hope to see you again next year.

Steve Palmer workday host

September 6 AGM and Volunteer Workday

After the 7th AGM, 32 TOSSI volunteers divided into three teams to tackle the tasks ahead. The weather was warm and sunny, almost a summer day!

Team one, lead by our newly elected vice chair Steve Palmer and his best supporter, Penny, took on the challenge with a team of TOSSI volunteers to complete the job of removing weeds from the new planting at Twin Hills. Lucky for them, a trip to Motoura was cancelled last week and 40 Motoura Supporter came to Tawharanui and removed the majority of the weeds, otherwise Steve and his team would still be there. (FYI Steve will not rest until the job is done, not even for lunch).

Team two, joined Alison Stanes and her continued efforts to rid the sand dunes of weeds. Her group targeted lupines, as most of the apple of Sodom and purple groundsel have been removed. It is on-going and with the NZ dotterel back on their territories, it is imperative that the dunes remain as weed-free as possible.

Team three, this author's team, headed to the west end to repair the storm damaged NZ dotterel fences at Pukenihihi Point and Comet Rocks, home to NZ dotterel and Variable Oystercatcher. Our job was made much easier by the delivery of the huge poles, spades, tape and a pail of staples from the duty ranger, Maurice Puckett, in his mighty quad along the beach. Peter Griffiths was the star, as he elected to take a ride back with Maurice to Comet Rocks, while the rest of us went over land. By the time we arrived, Peter and Maurice had the holes dug and poles in place. All we had to do was to staple the tape to the poles and look like we were working. A good time was had by all and the views of Little Barrier were spectacular! Peter and Maurice, thank you and thank you to everyone who volunteered throughout the year. We value your time and it helps us in measurable ways with a wide range of tasks.

Sharon Kast workday host

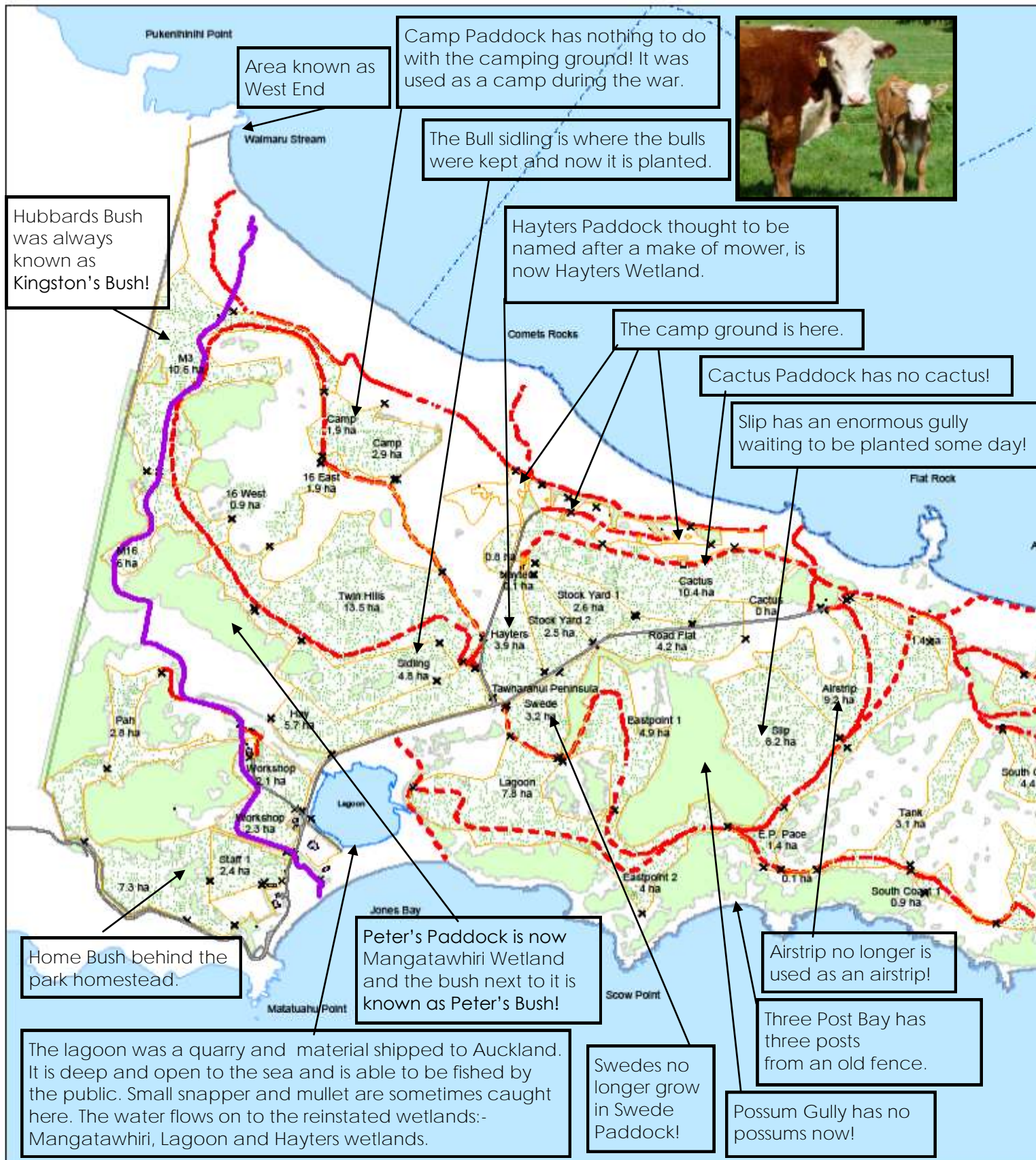


Left, The team repairing NZ dotterel fences.

Right, Weeding the dunes with a splendid view of Ocean Beach and Little Barrier.



Tawharanui evolves from intensive farming to an Open Sanctuary!



| Point Features | Line Features | Area Features |
|----------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| X Gate | Fence | Regional Parkland |
| Structure | Track | Buildings |
| Utility Point | Road | Lakes/ Ponds |
| Water Trough | Contour | Vegetation areas |
| Historic/ Maori site | Stream | Pasture/ Grazing |
| | Mountain Bike Trail | |
| | Horse Trail | |

New Zealand's first Open Sanctuary integrating conservation, farming and recreation.



When the Marine Park becomes a Marine Reserve this dotted blue line will become a straight line possibly with marker buoys, making management more efficient.

Prostrate manuka grows here and is a magic sight when flowering.

Lookout paddock has a great view back over Anchor Bay.

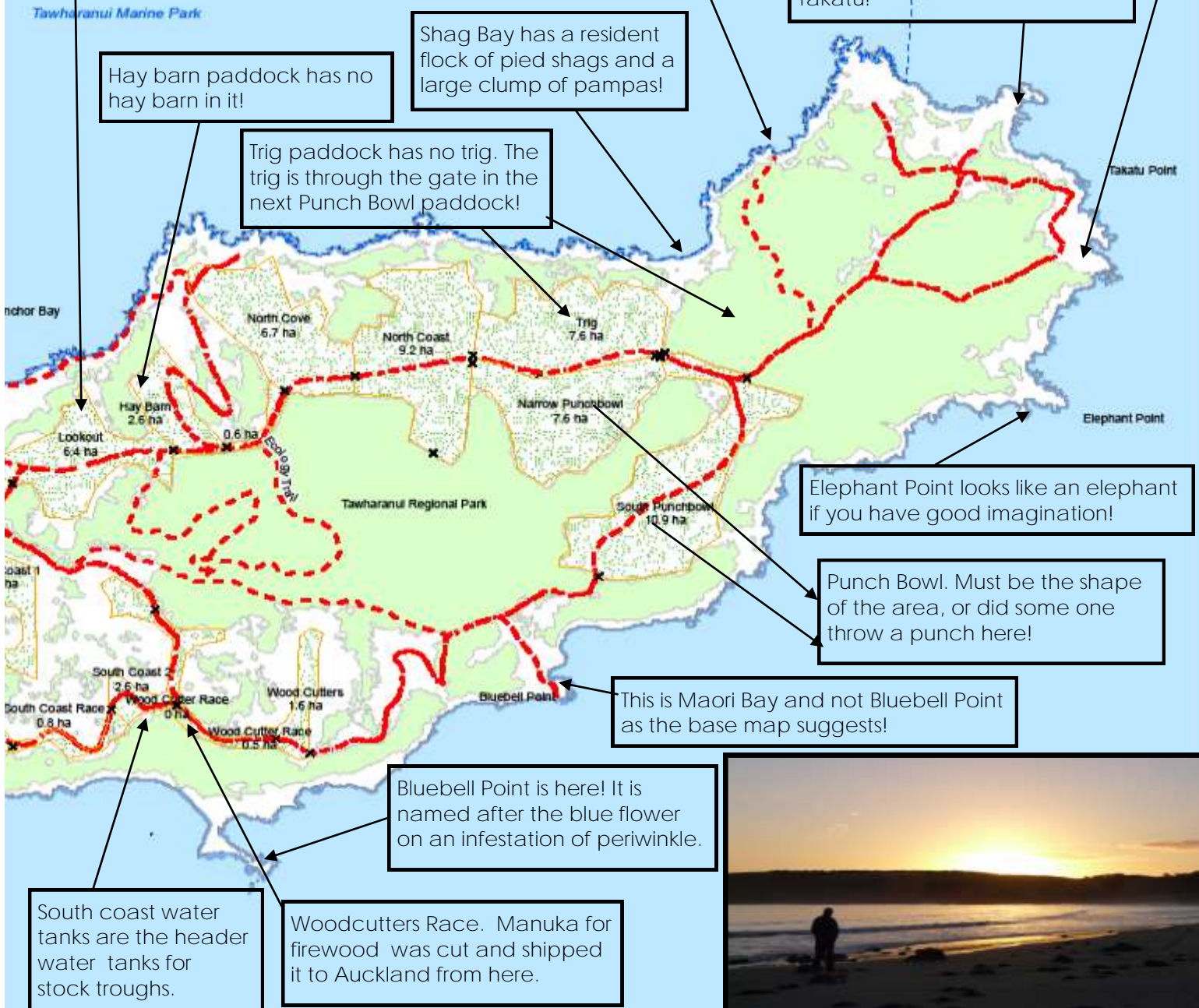
Ngaio Bay has original native ngaio trees.

Tokatu Point. Tokatu means upstanding rocks. Tokatu has at times mistakenly been spelt Takatu!

Shag Bay has a resident flock of pied shags and a large clump of pampas!

Hay barn paddock has no hay barn in it!

Trig paddock has no trig. The trig is through the gate in the next Punch Bowl paddock!



Elephant Point looks like an elephant if you have good imagination!

Punch Bowl. Must be the shape of the area, or did some one throw a punch here!

This is Maori Bay and not Bluebell Point as the base map suggests!

Bluebell Point is here! It is named after the blue flower on an infestation of periwinkle.

South coast water tanks are the header water tanks for stock troughs.

Woodcutters Race. Manuka for firewood was cut and shipped it to Auckland from here.



In the words of Bob "the times they are a changin"



When I started work with the ARC at Tawharanui in 1994 my title was "assistant ranger". Three people were required to live on park and work on roster. We all knew the park like the back of our hand and had an ownership of the property. These days we have one person living on park and the roster is run from a pool of Sector rangers.

In 1994 we had 106,000 visitors per year. This has increased to 160,000 visitors per year.

Fifteen years ago a ranger could ride a quad or two wheel bike without a helmet, licence or previous experience. We could drive tractors, spray weeds in shorts and jandals, use chainsaws and shoot rabbits without a licence and walk up to a nine foot tall trouble-maker and ask them to leave the park. Today rangers and even some volunteers

receive training in ATV and tractor driving, chainsaw use, first aid, livestock care and handling and bylaw enforcement; and they must have licences to carry out many of the pest control tasks.

In 1994 there were probably about 3 or 4 individual volunteers a year and a community service worker, and a one-off volunteer day each year attracting around 60 people. Today we have a constant flow of regular volunteers and a total of 8,819 hours were volunteered at Tawharanui in 2008-09. We have an Open Sanctuary Coordinator dedicated to the most exciting changes here at Tawharanui – the establishment of the Open Sanctuary. Part of my job description now is to nurture and manage volunteers on Tawharanui.

Many of the skills required in 1994 are still required now – and more. In '94 we had to maintain a tractor, a quad, a bike, a trailer, one stock pump and one bore pump. Today we have a ute, a tractor, two quads, a mule, a predator-proof fence and gate, an automatic front gate, a farm trailer, two road trailers, two quad trailers, a stock pump, a bore pump and a water treatment unit.

Someone asked me once what my job entailed. The answer was "Whatever it takes". Rangers must be able to diagnose problems with the above machinery, find and fix the many water problems that occur with any extensive water system, manage contractors on the park, be a midwife to stock, shorten the life of distressed stock, deliver best practice methods of pest control, have a good knowledge of NZ ecological principles and of native flora and fauna. They must be able to identify introduced weeds, keep inventories of assets, chemical use and dangerous goods and follow Health and Safety protocols as required by legislation. They need to be well organised in the office and proficient on the computer, need empathy, patience, and the confidence to deal with problem visitors. The lamb near the Lagoon is probably not suffering from arthritis as suggested by that caring park visitor; the dead calf will almost certainly turn out to be sleeping when the ranger rushes back from dinner to investigate! Their cheerful nature greeting 260 campers that flock to the place in the summer. They must be able to multi-task; the broken-down mule and the sudden lack of toilet paper are both vitally important to someone. When you happen upon a ranger with the glazed look of someone who has been slapped in the face with a wet mullet, be kind to them!

Thank goodness the most necessary quality a ranger needs is passion and dedication to the job – and we all have that in spades. Especially when we can go about our business to the chime of bellbirds and the chuckle of kakariki, and watch the antics of pateke; and with the knowledge that the work we are doing to ensure the success of the open sanctuary for our children and our grandchildren.

Maurice Puckett Resident Ranger



Kiwi calling counts at Tawharanui

TOSSI and ARC volunteers spent two hours on three consecutive nights monitoring Kiwi call as part of a National Kiwi call count survey. The techniques of listening for Kiwi and how to record calls were explained to the group. Safety first was stressed. On a moonless night, everything seems quite different no matter how well you know the park. Each team leader had a whistle, more than one torch with extra batteries, compass and watch to record calling times. The data is analyzed and entered on a map. Kiwi call counts take place twice a year in June and December on the darkest nights of the month. June 19, 20 and 21st were not only the darkest, but the coldest! Thank you to Alison for helping with Kiwi call recordings, providing maps of the listening sites and transport, for all with the exception of Penny and Steve. They had to walk to their isolated site at the South coast water tanks. Thankfully they heard Kiwi calling on their second night out.

Sharon Kast



The Saturday night team of kiwi call counters.

Now Available—Birds of Tawharanui checklist

Tawharanui is a wonderful place to see birds. Over the last thirty years, 89 species have been recorded in and around the park or just offshore. While some species such as NZ dotterel and shining cuckoo are present in certain seasons, many others can be seen year round because they are non migratory and because Tawharanui and the wider area provide an extensive range of habitats.

The key is knowing what to look for, where and when. 'Birds of Tawharanui' produced by TOSSI and printed by the ARC does just this. Take this checklist out with you when you next go to Tawharanui and enjoy the special experience that is the Tawharanui Open Sanctuary. To confirm your sightings and for further information about the birds, a good reference book is Heather & Robertson "The Field Guide to the Birds of New Zealand. This list is a compilation of records from the ARC, TOSSI, the Ornithological Society of New Zealand and a number of other observers. A special thank you to Dr. Michael Taylor for his assistance with this checklist.

The booklet is a pocket check checklist with a flexible but sturdy cover that may be picked up at the office at Tawharanui or in the woolshed on any TOSSI volunteer workday, the 1st Sunday of the month. The checklist is free, compliments of TOSSI. Happy birding!

Sharon Kast



Kiwis are checked and transmitters re-attached before the breeding season.



The radio telemetry indicates Geo is in here! Why not? it looks warm and cosy just above south coast bush!



Surprise, Geo is under the kikuyu with his female partner.



Geo fathered three chicks last season.



Gadjett relaxes ready for a check over!



Hercules also fathered three chicks last year.



Kiwi 88 has no name. His territory is on steep coastal cliffs on Tokatu Point. He shelters under the dry leaves of astelia.



Jackie Chan has a territory in upper ecology.

Kiwi encounters

There are 45 North Island brown kiwi plus new juveniles at Tawharanui. Ten of the adult birds had radio transmitters on their legs. In June three kiwi dropped their radio transmitters. This was indicated by a signal of 80 beeps per minute instead of the normal 33 beeps per minute. One radio transmitter was retrieved from bracken at Tokatu Point, the second from dense bush near Mangatawhiri Wetland. The third took some hunting because the signal seemed to be bouncing off hills in the Possum Gully area. Five of us were eyeing the dense bush wondering where it was going to be best to enter, when the signal was isolated as being very close right there in the paddock. One of the group bent down and picked it up. We were almost standing on it! Kiwi happily come out of the bush into open paddocks to feed at night. To find kiwi without radio tags requires hiring trained dogs with muzzles to sniff them out! Radio tags being dropped meant that other kiwi with transmitters required the tape holding the transmitters on, needed replacing before the breeding season started.



Geo was easily located over on the south coast. He loves the bush margins where mounds of kikuyu grass at the top of the cliffs with a warm northern aspect. As he was extracted from his cosy hideaway, it was discovered that his partner was tucked up with him. Health checks completed they were soon returned to their warm abode. Geo and his female partner produced three chicks last year from two broods.

Catching Gadjett on the slopes above Ngaio Bay we knew was not going to be so easy! And it wasn't! Just when we thought we had him surrounded and capture was eminent, he broke the lines and was off in a network of tunnels without a hint of movement in the under story vegetation. We cumbersome humans clambered over and under thick shrubbery, with telemetry receivers and capture nets getting caught during the hot sweaty pursuit. This was obviously kiwi habitat and we were clumsy aliens. Each time the two trackers with telemetry gear were close to Gadjett they wore head phones to prevent him from hearing the tracking beeps, that remind kiwi of capture, followed by indignant health checks, weighing, measuring and transmitter change. We had been warned by Matt Maitland that Gadjett was a runner! Maybe this was because of the nature of its habitat on the plateau of Tokatu Point with re-generating shrubbery, and pockets of understory of *schoenus* grass that linked a maize of hidden passages. **Twice there were sightings of his escapes and the word went up "visual" while he dashed off with the speed of summer lightning!**

Eventually Gadjett was surrounded in a clump of pampas without an escape route. With five awkward trackers, closing in around him he made a break in my direction which resulted in a victorious capture. I was as startled as he! Matt said, "It took two days last year. After three runs on the first day, we had to give up as it is too stressful for the kiwi." Gadjett rested comfortably in my arms. While we shifted a couple of metres to an area where we could sit Gadjett went in to a shock moult and feathers dropped. After the health check the tape on the radio transmitter was replaced and Gadjett was gently returned into the entrance of his tunnel network, where he can hang out undisturbed for another six months.

Hercules down on Tokatu Point likes to shelter under dead layers of flax leaves still attached to the plant leaving a nice little dry compartment. With his partner Dory last year also produced three chicks from nests in similar shelters. Flax does not provide escape tunnels, so he was caught without a fuss and checked and soon returned to his private shelter.

Kiwi 88 has no name. 88 is the radio call number. His territory is on steep coastal cliffs above Elephant Point. Access was by bush whacking down a steep bank through tall gorse manuka and flax. Locating his exact position was difficult because of the tall vegetation and the cliff faces below. Finally he was pinpointed under a wall of dry dead leaves still attached to an *astelia*. Health checks include checking to see if there is a brood patch, checking the thickness of flesh covering on the spine, weighing, measuring the length of the bill and a leg. Then changing the tape of the transmitter and popping the bird back in his hollow.

Radio tags certainly give us a information about how the kiwi are doing and an index of how breeding is going. They also give students opportunities for research. At Tawharanui the requirements for the Bank of New Zealand Kiwi Operation Nest Egg Programme have been fulfilled. Therefore radio transmitters might not be continued unless there is a specific purpose for them.

Alison Stanes

Art in the Woolshed Tawharanui 2010 – 6th – 14th March 2010

Six months to go until Saturday 6th March opening day for AITW Tawharanui 2010. Plans are well underway with the small exhibition team meeting monthly to work through all the various tasks that are required to be done leading up to opening.

As explained in the last newsletter we are privileged to have Barry Lett and Mike Petre curate this exhibition for TOSSI. They were instrumental in raising the bar at the last AITW and with a greater input this time things can only get better. Matakana artist, Virginia Leonard is also contributing with the organising.

The Mahurangi Group will be holding their exhibition over the same dates as ours in Matakana as they have done in previous years. What could be better than two outstanding exhibitions to visit in one day?

Last time we had approximately 50 TOSSI volunteers help man the exhibition and we will be requiring a similar number if not more for this next show. We will advertise for help via the monthly email workday reminder but if you do not have email and do not receive these reminders please contact either Rhys Thompson, 09 426 5421, myself on 09 422 9936 or email AITW2010@ihug.co.nz and we will put you down to help. It is a great way to spend half a day, or more if you can spare the time in the Sanctuary. Just hoping the weather will be as kind to us next year as it was for the last show.

Helen Crosby Exhibition Coordinator AITW2010

Weed Volunteers Required

If you ever want a satisfying day out at Tawharanui getting to hideaway placers on the park, come and join our weed team. This is being set up to assist ARC with weed problems. The ARC weed budget covers ecological threatening weeds but the budget falls short for removing many other unwanted weeds. If you would like to join us you need to be fit and give an occasional full day and bring picnic lunch.

Phone Alison Stanes to get your name on the list. Phone 09 5240291



Above, Alison Stanes hunts for moth plant pods from a tangle of vines brought down off the forest canopy near the park boundary. Each pod has millions of seeds ready to fly off over the park when the pod bursts. This moth plant had 190 pods which could have seeded across Tawharanui! Moth plant is a nasty climber capable of choking our forests. Sadly our forests require regular checking for it. Middle. Roger and Pat Williams with Louise a student volunteer have cut down a large bone seed on the north coast. Bone seed loves our coastal areas and grows faster than pohutukawa. Right. Maurice Puckett ARC Resident Ranger removes an *asparagus scandens* a climber which smoothers the forest understory. Alison Stanes



Exuberant spring lambs play at Tawharanui.
Photo by Bruce Ead CVNZ leader.



Ransom Wines TOSSI Fundraiser Dinner

Valerie Close, Warkworth

Saturday 17 October.

Great evening out thoroughly enjoyed by many
over the last couple of years.

\$55 per person

Limited Spaces- bookings are essential.

Email; info@ransomwines.co.nz

Phone: 09 425 8862

Membership News

Thank you to the 63% of members who have renewed your membership for the 2009-2010 financial year. You can look forward to receiving our quarterly newsletter and, for those of you with e-mail addresses, regular reminders of forthcoming work days and bird releases.

To the 37% of members who have not yet paid, regrettably this will be your last newsletter. We don't want to lose you so, quick, pay up and again be part of this worthwhile and rewarding project. To make it easier for you our banking details are as follows:

Name: Tawharanui Open Sanctuary Society Inc

Bank and Branch: National Bank, Warkworth

Account number: 060483-0072390-00

Seabird field trip opportunity

You will see in this newsletter the exciting news of the discovery of grey faced petrels breeding at Tawharanui. I was recently shown a picture of a grey faced petrel and asked what sort of duck I thought it was. I would have laughed except my knowledge of sea birds is not much better. Chris Gaskin who was responsible for the above discovery and who works with Kiwi Wildlife has offered to run a sea bird identification trip for TOSSI members.

Although he is offering his services we will need to cover the cost of chartering a boat. For a days charter it is likely to cost of the order of \$120 per person. There are a large variety of sea birds in the Hauraki Gulf and having an enthusiastic and knowledgeable guide is an opportunity that is not often available. If there are enough members interested we would try and organize the trip sometime in mid December. January would be the alternative.

If anyone is interested could they please e-mail or phone me in the near future so we can finalize dates and book a charter boat. Please indicate whether a week day or weekend is better.

Steve Palmer stevepenny@extra.co.nz

ph 09 4226441

TOSSI COMMITTEE

| | | |
|------------|----------------|-------------|
| Chair | Paul Williams | 09 425 9877 |
| Vice Chair | Steve Palmer | 09 368 7074 |
| Secretary | David Stone | 09 528 5712 |
| Treasurer | Joe Crandle | 09 425 8573 |
| Editor | Alison Stanes | 09 524 0291 |
| | Sharon Kast | 09 422 9990 |
| | Jan Halliday | 09 422 2356 |
| | Steve Harrison | 09 425 8500 |
| | James Ross | 09 422 6760 |

Correspondence Chairperson

or Membership Secretary

P.O Box 112

Matakana 0948, New Zealand

Email secretary@tossi.org.nz

Website: www.TOSSI.org.nz

Application form for NEW MEMBERS

Tawharanui Open Sanctuary

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone No. _____

E-Mail _____

Occupation _____

How did you hear about TOSSI?

Please tick how you would like to help:

☐ Planting/workdays ☐ Bird Counts

☐ Fund raising ☐ Administration

☐ Monitoring Pests ☐ Nursery

☐ Predator fence monitoring

☐ Environmental educational

☐ Publicity/promotion

☐ Art in the Woolshed

☐ Other _____

Membership fee:

\$20 single membership \$ _____

\$30 Family membership \$ _____

Additional contribution (optional) \$ _____

Donations over \$5 are tax deductible

Gift Membership:

Please send membership to

Name: _____

Address: _____

Amount of Gift membership(as above)\$ _____

Total amount enclosed \$ _____

Please make cheques payable to Tawharanui
Open Sanctuary Society Inc. and return the
completed form to:

TOSSI Membership Secretary

P.O.Box 112

Matakana 0948

Releases and natural returns to Tawharanui through thirty newsletters.

Between 2006 and 2007, forty four North island Brown kiwi were released at Tawharanui. The kiwi came through an Operation Nest Egg Program sponsored by the Bank of New Zealand, Save the Kiwi Trust. After incubation at the Auckland Zoo the chicks had two years on Moutora Island before being transferred to Tawharanui. By 2008-2009 season they are breeding successfully with six known chicks.



2006 Project Manager Jo Ritchie with councillor Christine Rose releasing a North Island brown kiwi.



2007 Twenty-one North island robin from Tiritiri Matangi and four more females from Puhoi were released in Tawharanui. They are breeding successfully.



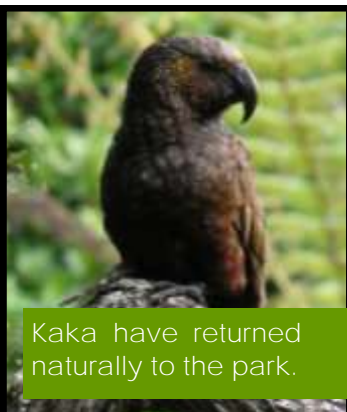
2007 Forty five whitehead from Tiritiri Matangi were released. They are breeding very rapidly!



2008 and 2009 over three releases, eighty four pateke from captive breeding stock were released, provided by the Pateke Recovery Group and sponsored by Banrock Station Wines and Wetland Care.



2009 Twenty four kākāriki were released from LB.



Kaka have returned naturally to the park.



Bellbird have returned naturally to the park



2009 Two male stitchbird observed visiting Tawharanui.