



# THE ISAAC CONSERVATION AND WILDLIFE TRUST

A study in conservation

Issue # 21 Spring 2019

## CONSERVATION

## NEWS

### *New Zealand's rarest mainland duck*

*The most successful captive breeding programme to date.*

*From a plummeting Brown Teal (pāteke) population of only 700 pāteke in the 1990's, the ICWT captive breeding programme has been instrumental in assisting the most successful native bird species recovery to date, building pāteke numbers up to approximately 2500 alive today.*

The endangered Brown Teal (pāteke), once widespread across New Zealand, is one of 3 Teal in New Zealand.

Working closely with DOC and Pāteke Species Co-ordinator Kevin Evans, numbers are recovering well and ICWT contributes significantly to this success.

Presently our 7 pairs of pāteke are all breeding here on site with some pairs now onto their second or third clutch already. We hope each pair will average a total of 15 ducklings by the end of the season. Collectively our pairs will breed an estimated 100 ducklings for release into the wild.

ICWT also provide facilities for flock mating for other pāteke breeding institutions plus pre-release conditioning and processing.

Every captive raised bird comes to ICWT as our aviaries have stream fed waterways for foraging, plus special feeders where the

Brown Teal learn to obtain food. These feeders are also located at eventual release sites to assist the Brown Teal when released into their natural environment.

Mainly nocturnal and only half the size of a mallard, this shy omnivorous duck also spends time on land foraging for invertebrates, seeds, fruit, grass and foliage.

There can be up to 160—180 pāteke that we are caring for throughout the season, as other breeding institution's juveniles join our own young here on site, for their pre-release conditioning and

processing. This includes banding, worming, disease screening and transmitter attachment in preparation for their release.

Generally three releases occur annually (Dec, Feb and May) and it's so rewarding to know we are contributing towards increasing the population of this little dabbling duck!.



Wildlife



Landscape



Heritage Village



Isaac Walkways



Maintenance



News in brief



## Wildlife News

### *Orange-fronted parakeet / kākāriki karaka*

Last breeding season a number of eggs were collected from the wild to boost the genetic diversity of the captive population. From the Poulter Valley where only 2 or 3 wild males remain, we had released our captive bred females and luckily one did pair up with a wild male. We were able to collect two part clutches from this pair (a number of eggs were left for the pair to raise in the wild) and the chicks that hatched here have been retained for captive breeding.

Also, eggs were collected from Blumine Island where we released birds in 2011 and are genetically different from the current captive population. We spent autumn force pairing some of these birds but when able, flock mated as well. These pairs haven't started to breed yet, but we hope they will commence soon as there are some positive signs.



### *Blue Duck / whio*

Our Blue Duck season is going great guns with both of our South Island pairs already having laid their second clutches. We have 11 ducklings from the first clutches plus another 9 ducklings from the second clutches that hatched during early and mid November. We have also received ducklings from Queenstown Kiwi and Birdlife Park plus Willowbank to raise along with ours and all these ducklings will be released on the West Coast and Motueka early next year.



We also have 2 new pairs from the Karamea area and we are hoping to get at least one clutch from each pair however, our keepers have noticed they are already moulting, something they don't normally do until after the breeding season. We will have to wait and see.



*“The sustainable conservation of our environment for perpetuity.”*



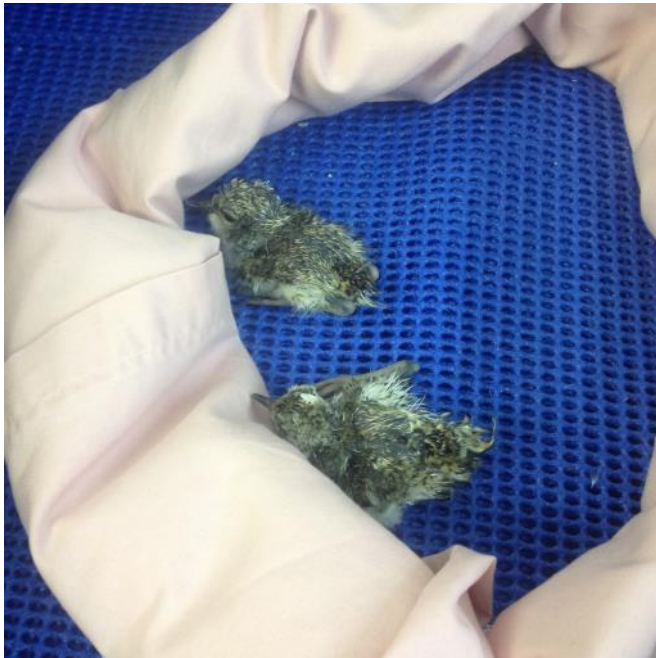


## *Wildlife News continued*

### *NZ Shore plover / tūturuatu*

In November last year, Leigh Percasky our Assistant Wildlife Manager, travelled to Waikawa Island to collect 2 clutches of eggs from wild NZ Shore Plover nests. These birds are descendants from captive released birds which are now only thinly represented in the captive population. A total of 4 chicks were hatched and raised here at Peacock Springs.

During August and September this year, 2 of the wild males were flock mated along with a female from 1 of our original



pairs. A new partnership was formed very quickly and successfully with Jamie and Jackie soon re-homed into their own aviary.

Jamie and Jackie promptly settled down and within four weeks produced their first clutch of 3 eggs. Ten days later this first clutch was collected for hand rearing and 2 chicks hatched with the third egg being clear.

Jamie and Jackie have already laid their second clutch which will also be taken but we will leave their third clutch for them to raise in their aviary themselves.

### *Black Stilt / kaki release*

After a really late start to the Kaki breeding season (in the wild as well), finally our 2 pairs have commenced laying eggs. It's the first time for our young pair, Tekapo and Tasman, to lay here at Peacock Springs. Unfortunately, they made a poor choice in selecting their nesting site, by building the nest adjacent to the doorway then laying a egg in it. Sadly, this egg was damaged but Tekapo and Tasman thought "oh well" and went back to their original nest building site on the island and proceeded to lay 5 more eggs over the week.



Normal clutch size for Black Stilt is 4 eggs and they have laid a total of 6 on their first go! These eggs will be collected by DOC and transferred to Twizel for artificial incubation and hand rearing, as for most of our critically endangered species this entices pairs to re-nest and produce more chicks for release.



*"To fulfil the legacy of Sir Neil and Diana, Lady Isaac."*





## *Otukaikino News – The Isaac Walkways*

### *A Half marathon Walk!*

Three Christchurch walking tracks were merged to create the scenic 22km Otukaikino to Waimakariri Long Loop Walk as part of The CCC Breeze Walking Festival on 28 September 2019 for a very special guided six-hour walk that incorporated the Isaac Walkways.

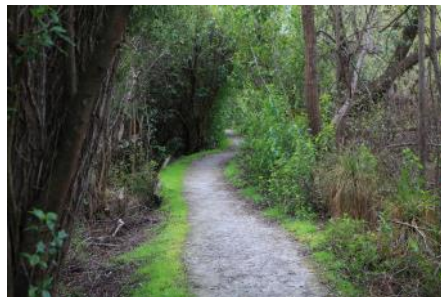
Environment Canterbury, Christchurch

City Council and The Isaac Conservation and Wildlife Trust worked together to connect the Templar's Island Trail, Ōtukaikino Trail, and the Isaac Farm Walk for this inaugural event.

35 walkers joined rangers from Environment Canterbury, Christchurch City Council and The Isaac Conservation

and Wildlife Trust for a truly special and epic event.

Starting at the Groynes Reserve, walkers followed the Ōtukaikino Stream to the Waimakariri River on an adventure on Christchurch's northern edge. The loop is close to the city and has some important biodiversity areas for Canterbury.



### *Arthur's seat celebration*

Champion of the Otukaikino Arthur Adcock, enjoyed a very special morning tea upon a bench seat ICWT placed along the bank of the Otukaikino Waterway, on the Isaac Loop Track, in appreciation of Arthur's work.

*Arthur's passion for the Otukaikino waterway plus surrounds has been acknowledged in the plaque and we are grateful for his tireless energy to undertake eco-restoration of this very special area.*



# *“A Study In Conservation”*





## Landscape News

*Spring is such a challenging time of year for our landscaping team as the explosion of growth creates a staggering workload. It's like trying to hold back the tide, but we have a great team who are all totally committed to the Isaac site and its beautification.*

Our recent planting projects have really taken hold and the landscaping team can be proud of what they are achieving in eco-restoration too. The planting of the north side of Lake Diana is less than 5 years old but appears far more mature thanks to various factors including; compost, mulch, maintenance spraying and irrigation. This planting shows what can be achieved in the short term, with hard work, planning and preparation.



Even the Wildlife bathrooms have been given a planting facelift and look very attractive now.



We watch with anticipation for the establishment of the newly planted Corner Field. Thank you to Isaac Construction staff members plus the Canterbury Crusader staff members who assisted with planting these natives.



This autumn we look forward to planting out the McArthur's road entrance with natives to mirror those already opposite.



## Maintenance News

Fortunately, the seismic upgrade of the Wildlife Headquarters together with the refurbishment of the bird food preparation areas and incubator room were finished by spring. The Wildlife Division are appreciative of the improvements and certainly putting them to good use as the captive breeding programme enters its busiest season.

The maintenance division has recently assisted Isaac Asphalt in relocating a portacom onto their site, to increase their office capacity.



*Aspiration, Realisation, Conservation.*



# THE ISAAC CONSERVATION AND WILDLIFE TRUST

*A study in conservation*

## *Take a Kid Fishing Event*

On Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> October over 6,000 people flocked to the annual Take a Kid Fishing Event held at the Groynes, Christchurch. ICWT donated 800 salmon that were specially grown for the event by Fish and Game. It was wonderful to see many families experiencing and enjoying the outdoors.



## *Heritage News*

On Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> October, 35 descendants of William Francis and Fan McArthur visited the Clifton Homestead, (now the headquarters of the Isaac Conservation and Wildlife Trust.)

The McArthur's have a long and rich history to the McLean's Island area commencing from 1913 when William's parents, James and Maggie McArthur, farmed 50 acres encompassing the Clifton Homestead.

Sir Neil and Lady Isaac purchased the Clifton Homestead and surrounding land in the early 1950's and founded Isaac Construction Ltd that still operates from the now enlarged site.

The Clifton Homestead remains in excellent condition and is unusual that, after nearly 100 years, has only been lived in by two families, the McArthurs then Sir Neil and Lady Isaac.



## *Who's who?*

### **ICWT Administration**

Rob Clarke—Executive Trustee  
Bill Luff—Trustee  
Alister McDonald—Trustee  
Bruce Rule—Operations Manager  
Catherine Ott—Administration Manager

### **Building/Maintenance Division**

Hamish Milne—Builder  
Bill Waterman—Apprentice Builder  
Peter Jones—Painter/Handyman

### **Wildlife Division**

Anne Richardson—Wildlife Manager  
Leigh Percasky—Assistant Wildlife Manager  
Olly Gooday—Wildlife Keeper  
Emma Cournane—Wildlife Keeper  
Fran Johnson—Wildlife Keeper  
Katie Loyd—Wildlife Keeper  
Chloe Jackson—Wildlife Keeper

### **Landscape Division**

Victoria Taylor—Landscape Gardener  
Ian Gebbie—Landscape Gardener  
Rob Smit—Landscape Gardener  
Pryderi Hughes—Landscape Gardener

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