

Bird study to help pupils to fly high

By JARED NICOLL

Kaikoura High School pupils may participate in a learning experiment on Hutton's Shearwaters in all subjects for part of their school year.

Year 9 pupils will study the seabirds for one unit in every department at the same time to provide a consistent approach to learning at the start of the 2012 school year.

The birds were chosen because of their uniqueness to the area.

Kaikoura High School head of maths department Bill Lonsdale was behind the plan and said he would speak to the other heads of department about ways it could be implemented later this month.

"I'm trying to get it fully integrated across all the subjects in year 9 for one unit of work, which is about four to six weeks.

"I'm going to put a bit of pressure on [the other HODs] to come onboard this year.

The English department could look at ways of using the birds as the basis of a research essay or a subject for poetry while the social sciences department could investigate how they interacted with

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Bill Lonsdale

people, he said.

"I'm not sure how the PE department would do it," he said as a joke.

"If we have a theme running throughout our teaching, the kids latch onto it better."

Pupils often departmentalised their learning between subjects and failed to see how one related to another.

Thematic learning bridged the gaps and encouraged their enthusiasm by allowing them to easily transfer their knowledge between departments, he said.

"It helps them to see the value of what they're learning in the classroom."

The Ministry of Education had encouraged thematic learning across the country over the last 10 years, but it was up to schools to ensure a theme covered the pupil's necessary learning achievements to pass each subject, he said.

"I want to expand the idea

because it was such a success this year in the science and maths departments [at Kaikoura High School]."

This year, year 9 maths pupils compared survey results that looked at tourist's and local resident's knowledge of Hutton's Shearwaters as their statistics learning unit from September to November.

Kaikoura High School pupil Caitlin Bell-Speirs said she enjoyed learning about the birds and found the themed approach allowed her to focus her learning to achieve better results.

"Doing them in science and maths definitely helped because we did it more times per week than other things.

"It was fun learning about the birds because they're unique.

"In maths we learned to use statistics and in science we looked at their environment, and it all worked together," she said.



Advocate: School teacher Bill Lonsdale is passionate about nature, particularly Hutton's Shearwaters. **Photo:** JARED NICOLL

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Building threatened

How many Kaikoura residents realise that constructing a new museum on the proposed West End site involves demolition of the existing library building?

Present plans provide library space, with access by lift, at one end of the first floor (of a three-storey building) above the museum which occupies the entire ground floor.

It is a pity these plans have reached such an advanced stage without informing and requesting input from library users, who at over 60 per cent of the resident population, represent a major group of stakeholders.

They may have strong views about the potential destruction of a relatively recent building which functions well as a library, with ground floor access for elderly and

disabled users.

We are all aware of the museum's urgent need to relocate from its present flood-prone site, but alternative areas should be considered to find a solution helpful to all residents without marginalising library users.

It should be remembered that the Cuddon's site on Beach Rd was purchased by the council several years ago, with the intention of locating the museum and possibly council offices there, but was never used for them.

There is potential for demolition of the old factory building on that site, and either relocating the library building there, or building the new museum on the site, allowing the library to remain as it is.

More detailed information provided by the council and museum authorities, and

comments from residents via the letters column, could be helpful, before a formal submission process occurs, for public consultation.

Kathie Roberts

System working

In response to the recent article 'Paua quota change unnecessary' I would suggest Te Korowai's aims include building and maintaining a fence at the top of the cliff; nobody wants ambulances at the bottom.

That paua numbers are still plentiful is largely due to the 1986 Quota Management System, the basic structure of the fence.

Size limit changes and other measures carried out by commercial divers (catch-effort spreading, reseeding programme) should be seen as the fence's

netting. Commercial divers observe three different size limits within Pau3 – the highest is 130mm compared to those of other stakeholders of 125mm. This allows paua an extra breeding cycle or two – finer mesh in the fence.

To ensure long-term sustainability, all would agree that total catch needs a cap.

Commercial harvest has been capped since 1986 and catch spread arrangements have brought a reduction along the Kaikoura coastline of over 30 per cent in the last 10 years. Non-commercial use remains uncapped.

The proposed change from 10 to six per day is still not a cap as numbers of participants and annual harvest days remain unrestricted. California, by contrast, allows three abalone per

day and a maximum eight days yearly – an ambulance at the bottom.

Te Korowai members have strived conscientiously to bring continued sustainability to our shared coastline, recognising responsibilities are greater than rights.

We all own shared resources and hold dear our rights.

Now is the time to remember responsibility.

We encourage those who consider their particular interests to be impacted to instead consider the greater good for all who value this treasured coastline.

David Rae,
Pauamac3 chair and amateur fisherman

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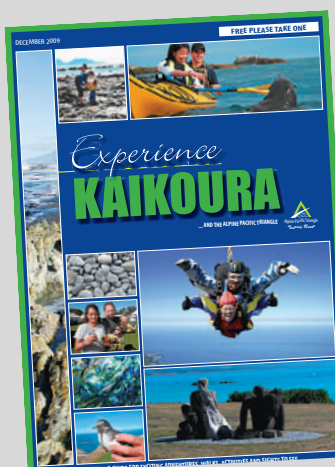
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