



THE Hutton's Shearwater

CHARITABLE TRUST NEWSLETTER

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Special points of interest:

- Breeding success
- Feeding frenzy of the Titi
- No socks in his boots?!
- Onwards and upwards
- Movie night at the May-fair
- Southland Bird conference

Kia ora,

It would be easy to think the bulk of the work has been done now that the predator proof fence on the Kaikoura Peninsula has been completed. This only represents the beginning of what is a major long term project to create a third colony of Hutton's Shearwater.

Attention has now turned to ensuring the area within the enclosure is totally pest-free. 'Predator proof' implies that once the fence is completed any problems from predators are over, but that is far from the case. Although such fences are a great help in furthering conservation aims of a project like this, they are only as good as the maintenance and monitoring work that needs to be relentlessly undertaken to ensure pests stay out. Experience at other locations throughout NZ has shown that such fences can be breached. This was a strong message that emerged at the Southland Ecological Regional Network (SERN) conference in Bluff & Stewart Island which I attended recently.

We are fortunate in having a relatively short fence boundary to maintain but this is not a reason to think pests could not penetrate this fence. This has been factored into the ongoing work programme for the site.

The fence has occupied a lot of our initial focus but the Trust is also actively involved in research at the wild mountain colonies. The Trust will also be embarking on the preparation of a long term strategy for its work with this species which will guide future endeavours.

Support for the work of the Trust continues to come in a variety of ways, which is appreciated. The recent generosity of Whale Watch in giving the proceeds from a Whale film screened in Kaikoura is just one example of the way in which the community supports this work.

Hutton's Shearwater continues to receive publicity, most recently through an article in the Christchurch Press by Tahu Potiki highlighting the close relationship that Ngai Tahu has with both this species and other shearwaters.

Membership of our 'Friends' group continues to steadily grow and I thank all of you who have joined.

I hope you enjoy the articles contained in this latest newsletter covering the work of the Hutton's Shearwater Charitable Trust.

Paul McGahan
Chairman



A bumper year for Hutton's Shearwater



Above—DOC's Area Manager, Dave Hayes, with one of this year's bumper crop, Kowhai valley. March 2010.

Below—Ian Surgenor, DOC Kaikoura, scrambling back to the helipad, after a day's burrow scoping in Shearwater Stream, February 2010.

Bottom—A fat & fluffy Hutton chick. Kowhai Colony March 2010.



There is no doubt that 2010 would have to be one of the best years for our unique and endangered Hutton's Shearwater; not only is the predator-proof fence around the new colony on the Kaikoura peninsula a major step forward for their conservation, but they have had the best breeding season in their mountain colonies on record!

In the first two newsletters you will have read about two new initiatives in the mountain colonies over the past two years; the establishment of a large walk-in pig trap at the entrance to the Kowhai River colony and a robust stoat control programme in the Shearwater Stream Colony. These conservation management activities are run in conjunction with rigorous scientific monitoring of how the shearwater populations are actually doing.

The pig trap has been operational now for 14 months and so far has caught nothing. This is good news and means that pig numbers in the area are low. The trap was baited with goat carcasses at the beginning of the season, as pigs seem to relish eating rotting carcasses!

The stoat trapping programme in Shearwater Stream continues to run smoothly and traps are still checked 3-weekly where possible during the season. This season 3 stoats were trapped (cf 8 last season). In early April 2010, Mike Morrissey and

Lance Godfrey went for the final trap check and maintenance run before the winter. The traps are left set, as there is always a chance of trapping animals between now and when they get checked again at the first opportunity in spring. We acknowledge the landowner, Nicky McArthur, her family and manager, Lance Godfrey for their continued support of this project.

In February and March we returned to Shearwater Stream and the Kowhai catchment, respectively, to carry out our end of season breeding success assessment. What a surprise we were in for! Following three poor breeding seasons at both colonies (17%, 32%, and 25% in the Kowhai and 4%, 6% and 27% in Shearwater Stream) this season's result have been nothing short of astounding. We recorded **81% breeding success in both colonies**. This is the highest breeding success figure ever recorded for Hutton's shearwaters and is also very high for any seabird for that size and with a similar biology.

Considering the worry we have all had about the breeding success results at both wild colonies, I believe we can take a breath and relax (momentarily!). After such a fantastic breeding season in these colonies, we should see

some substantial recruitment of young birds back in to the population in the next 5 years. At this stage it would be challenging to ascribe an ecological mechanism behind this huge increase in breeding success, but I would put my money on some sort of at sea effect. We have had very similar stoat control effort in Shearwater Stream for the past two seasons, so it is logical to assume that this year's bumper breeding success is not due to any stoat predation (or lack of) effect. More than happy to be proved wrong though!

The next few years monitoring will be very exciting, as we can expect further fluctuations in breeding success. Our plan is to turn stoat trapping "on" and "off" over the next 5 years and hopefully by doing this we will be able to determine whether stoat trapping is actually worthwhile for the conservation of Hutton's shearwaters or whether the future health of these two populations is actually determined by factors that we can have very little influence over. Watch this space!

Phil Bradfield

Trustee & Biodiversity Programme Manager (DOC, South Marlborough Area Office)

See our website for more great photos



Hutton's and the Ngāti Kuri

Ngāti Kuri are the tangata whenua who have manawhenua and manamoana in the takiwā of Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura. The takiwā of Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura centres on Takahanga Marae and extends from Te Parinui o Whiti to the Hurunui River and inland to the Main Divide.

Manawhenua and manamoana are determined by whakapapa, and confer customary authority. The manawhenua and manamoana status of Ngāti Kuri comes from continuous land use and occupation of the Kaikōura area.

Takahanga Marae is the standing place for Ngāti Kuri. The marae is located on the original site of the ancient Takahanga Pā overlooking the Kaikōura township. It was developed in the 1980's and the

Whareniui (meeting house) officially opened in January 1992. The Marae has traditionally been, and continues to be, the place where Ngāti Kuri, as tangata whenua, gather to korero and dialogue with others.

Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura is the modern day representative and administrative council of the hapu Ngāti Kuri. Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura are a Papatipu Rūnanga of Ngāi Tahu Whānui, recognised in the First Schedule of the Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu Act 1996. Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu represents the tribal collective of Ngāi Tahu Whānui, and was established by the Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu Act 1996 to give legal identity to the tribe.

In this role, Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura has a responsibility

to protect the natural resources, mahinga kai, and other values of the takiwā for the benefit of those people of Ngāi Tahu descent who have customary interests in the takiwā.

All matters relating to natural resources, environmental management and other values in the takiwā are to be directed to Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura, as the representative body of Ngāti Kuri, the tangata whenua who have manawhenua in the takiwā.

The project of relocating Tītī (Hutton Shearwater) to a protected headland of the Kaikōura Peninsula has a special significance to Ngāti Kuri. In the late 11th - early 12th century the canoe Uruao, captained by Rākihouia spent some time in the area. During the stay Rākihouia witnessed the

feeding frenzy of the Tītī and traced them back to their breeding grounds in the mountains. The present project in which Ngāti Kuri, Department of Conservation and Whale Watch are close partners provides a direct traditional link with the tupuna (ancestor) Rākihouia and so creates a whakapapa link which is at least as strong as the interest in the conservation aspect of the project. This link is also the origin of the name "Ka Whata Tu o Rākihouia" (the uplifted food stores of Rākihouia) which is the name of the Seaward Kaikōura Conservation Park.

Gina Solomon, Takahanga Marae, Trustee.



Peninsula colony snap shot

The following is a snap shot of what has been happening out at the Peninsula Colony.

Final touches to the predator fence included regrassing the area outside to prevent erosion of the soil exposing the skirt, and pulling out the old existing fence. We are about to put a stock fence outside the actual predator fence to eliminate stock damage which could compromise the function of the fence. The pest eradication programme inside the fence has begun and next season we will be able to get a

good assessment of the birds returning as there will be no rabbits interfering with the indicator pins at the entrance to the nestboxes. Planting of native species in and around the site to improve habitat for the birds is to begin in late May 2010; the plants having been funded by World Wide Fund for Nature.

We saw three banded birds during the day in our nestboxes in December and February while checking for signs of birds returning. To me, this was totally unexpected as these birds usually spend day-

time at sea when not courting or guarding newly hatched chicks. Other birds were seen flying over during a nighttime visit and feathers were found in a number of other burrows. So, bring on next summer as monitoring the nestboxes promises to be exciting.

A research programme has been proposed by Trustees Mike Bell and Lindsay Rowe, based on monitoring burrows and bird movements. The high quality of the programme is demonstrated by successful funding

applications to the Sargood Bequest for a burrowscope, the Pacific Development & Conservation Trust, the Lottery Environment & Heritage Fund and the Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund for equipment and logistics; the latter receives bids to fund research throughout the world and was obviously impressed by our project. More about this programme in the next newsletter but there are exciting times ahead.

Trustee, Treasurer, Project Manager, Lindsay Rowe

Hutton's t-shirts hot off the press

The Trust is selling its very own t-shirts now, hot off the press.

You can have your very own Hutton's t-shirt and contribute to the preservation of this incredibly unique seabird. Remember, they are only found here in Kaikoura. Hence the wording on the t-shirt is just that—'*Hutton's Shearwater...their last place on earth, Kaikoura, New Zealand*'.



T-shirts are available in army green (pictured left), white and royal navy blue in both women's and men's sizing. You can purchase your own t-shirt for \$25 by contacting Lindsay Rowe on 03 319 7211.



Left—Kaikoura Wilderness Walkway staff in their new t-shirts.

Pioneer expeditions with Geoff

Hutton's History' by Geoff Harrow.

Stay tuned for Geoff's often amusing recounts of the 'earlier days' in the world of the Hutton's.

Below— Richard Cuthbert on a trip with Geoff in the upper Kowhai Valley, 1997.

Companions who gave me so much help in the early days of researching the breeding of Hutton's Shearwaters, are remembered in this story.

Brian Bell, father of our trustee Mike Bell was a senior Field Officer with the Wildlife Division of the Department of Internal Affairs in the 1960's. Brian taught me how to band the Shearwater and came on many of my early field expeditions. He made so many useful suggestions as to how I should go about my field research. He shot many deer and goats that were damaging the burrows.

Deryck Morse, my brother in law, a highly competent mountaineer, regularly accompanied me on many climbs into the different shearwater colonies over a period of 35 years.

When we became a little slower, Deryck and I would share the cost of a helicopter ride in to the breeding grounds and walk out when

we had finished our work. It was eight minutes to fly in and once it took us two days to walk out as we battled flooded rivers!

Dick Jackson often known as Kea Jackson was a tough reliable member of many of my early trips. He never wore socks in his mountain boots and no mountain route ever deterred him. He liked to travel up the true left of the Kowhai to the colonies so that he could look at falcon nests on the way. In the vilest weather Dick could have a fire roaring in no time using small squares of rubber he always carried. He once showed me 14 active kea nests in one day near Arthurs Pass.

Dick Jackson went missing from his high altitude alpine camp site in South Westland while searching for petrel colonies in the mid 1980's. His body was never recovered.

Two young teen age students, Phil Crosier and Jim Hilton were both keen members of the Ornithological Society and both later joined the Canterbury

Mountaineering Club. They were both very fit lads and though young, already were competent observers of birds. They took like ducks to water when it came to banding, measuring and recording data on the Hutton's Shearwaters. They both came on several early trips and were so helpful.

I keep in touch with Jim Hilton from time to time and Phil Crosier who is Professor of Molecular Medicine at the University of Auckland has recently become a '*Friend of Hutton's Shearwater*' and wants to help our Trust in future projects.

Many companions came on later trips once or twice but there is just not enough space available in this story to mention them all by name.

I am indebted to you all for your valuable contribution in saving the Hutton's Shearwater from extinction, and this includes all of my family who helped in many ways.

Geoff Harrow
Settlor and Trustee.



Friends of update

Dear Friends,

Well we are now heading into winter and the Hutton's Shearwaters have mostly all departed. There have been quite a few younger birds remaining out at sea which seems late. However Mike Morrissey (DOC) tells me there are a lot of krill about and thinks because the feeding is so good they have delayed their departure and are "stocking up" before migrating to Australia.

A round up of our membership shows that we currently have 94 members. Thank you to those who have joined our worthy cause. And a quick request to encourage those who have expressed an interest in becoming a *Friend* but not quite filled out their

forms – we look forward to receiving them!!

I was lucky enough to be invited to speak at the local Royal Forest and Bird Annual General Meeting in April. It was a great opportunity to be able to answer some questions about the Hutton's Shearwaters and in particular Shearwater Stream, to the best of my ability. Thank you Forest and Bird for this opportunity.

Our new t-shirts are selling strongly and are proving very popular. See the article on page 4 for how you can get hold of one.

D i a n e P a t o n (Environmental Ambassador for Air New Zealand) was recently a guest of Kaikoura Wilderness Walks; she runs a 'Green Team' initiative around

environmental awareness. She was fascinated by the Hutton's Shearwater story and departed from Kaikoura with one of our t-shirts. She recently wore it when making an Air NZ advertisement 'Fanatical Behind the Scenes' for Facebook. See the link <http://www.facebook.com/video/video.php?v=10150178024885226&ref=mf>

Have a look. Di is the one in the green Hutton's Shearwater 'tee'! She loves her 'tee' and says she wears it lots and is continually asked about it! Fantastic advertising for the species and the Trust. A special thanks to Diane for supporting our Trust and continuing to spread the word on our behalf.

We are also in conversation with an international media

connection with the possibility of some TV coverage. Nothing confirmed yet; but seems the word is getting out around the globe about what we are up to here in Kaikoura.

We look forward to hosting our 'Friends' to our fence celebration in October - details to be advised later.

Thank you all again for your support of the Hutton's Shearwaters.

Nicky McArthur

Convenor *Friends of Hutton's Shearwater.*



Only ten left—be in quick!

Austen Deans aged 94, a renowned mountain landscape painter, agreed to paint Hutton's Shearwater flying at sea level with the Kaikoura mountains as a background.

The end result is this brilliant painting which Austen has agreed to allow the Trust to copy as a fund raiser. Austen has personally numbered and signed fifty prints which makes them so much more valuable. Most of Austen's original paintings sell for many thousands of dollars. You can purchase your own signed print for just \$250 from Trustee Geoff Harrow (9 Alderson Ave, Christchurch 8022, (03) 332 4534 or by emailing

admin@huttonsshearwater.org.nz

Prints are 620mm x 420mm.

This will assist in the ongoing fundraising for the protection of the shearwaters.



50 prints were personally hand signed by Austen Deans .

There are only 10 left—be in quick!

Hutton's house keeping

Where have we been, what have we been up to?

Kaikoura A&P Show—a superb sunny day on Saturday February 27th and people were out enjoying it. The trust members chatted to many, ran a raffle and took a guided tour around to the peninsula colony. All in all a good day and our new promotional material looked great.

Seaweek March 7th— a mixed day of attendance from the public for the community event, however still a good opportunity to get out there amongst those who are interested.

Movie night at Mayfair Theater— *The Hunt for Moby-Dick* confronts our fascination with this extraordinary animal, and the book it inspired: Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick*.

An adventure documentary sponsored at the Mayfair Theater by Whale Watch Kaikoura & Dolphin Encounter with all proceeds going to the Hutton's Shearwater Charitable Trust. This simple act of generosity raised the Trust over \$400—a big thank you to Whale Watch & Dolphin Encounter for their continued support. Thank you to Phillip Hoare, and also to Mike Donoghue

of the Department of Conservation. Also a thank you to the community for coming along and supporting this initiative.

Southland Bird Conference—The Trusts Chairman recently attended the Southland Ecological Regional Network (SERN) conference attended by 50+ people representing community groups, Councils, DoC and Forest & Bird. Although many were from Southland there were also groups from Northland (Kiwi project), and Orokonui near Dunedin where a major sanctuary has been developed with over \$5m raised. The weekend involved presentations and field trips to some of the exciting community based projects on Stewart Island. Wayne McCallum, the Canterbury Regional Biodiversity Coordinator and the Chair gave a presentation on Hutton's Shearwater including the new fence on the Kaikoura Peninsula. A key point that repeatedly emerged in discussions on predator fences was of the need to be continually vigilant to ensure pests stay on the outside. Congratulations to Gay Munro and her SERN team for the well run and organised weekend and to the hospitality of the Stewart Island folk.

Roam, Rove & Rediscover— a guided walk on the Kaikoura Peninsula Track to celebrate International Day of Biodiversity on Sunday 23rd May. The walk was 'guided' by various experts, including Trustee Phil Bradfield, Brett Cowan of DoC, Alex Thompson of Dolphin Encounter, and Wayne McCallum, the Regional Biodiversity Coordinator, noting all things Biodiverse along the way including the Hutton's. A planting also took place at the new Hutton's Colony. A good day out with 20 or so interested folk.



Above: Trustees Phil Bradfield and Mike Bell at the Kaikoura A&P Show with the new trust flag.

Our main sponsors—many thanks

NZ Lottery Grants Board, Sargood Bequest, Pacific Development & Conservation Trust, Mohamed Bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund and.....



FOREST & BIRD



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The Hutton's Shearwater Charitable Trust was established in 2008 to: *encourage and promote the preservation, conservation, research, public education, and sustainable management of the Hutton's shearwater.*