



THE Hutton's Shearwater CHARITABLE TRUST

NEWSLETTER

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Kia ora

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As most of you may already know from media releases and contact with 'Friends of Hutton's Shearwater', the Hutton's Shearwater Charitable Trust received fantastic post Christmas news. On or about Christmas or Boxing Day 2011, a shearwater chick became reality – the first for the artificial colony that is being developed on the Kaikoura Peninsula. This is a major milestone for the Trust and a wonderful reward for all of the hard work put in by Trustees, 'Friends', the Department of Conservation, Te Runanga o Kaikoura, Whale Watch, volunteers and others who have contributed in various ways over the last few years. Four eggs were laid in next boxes at the Kaikoura Peninsula this season, up from the two laid the previous year, both of which failed. This season, three of the four eggs did not get beyond that stage, at least one considered to be infertile and the reason for the other two failing, not being totally clear. The Trust is aware however that this is not unusual and that first time breeders often fail in their initial attempts to become parents.

It is still early days in the formation of this colony but the fact that birds returned far earlier than anyone ever thought they would, and started breeding far earlier than expected, points to success, and gives confidence that this colony will succeed over the long term. Read about the detail in Lindsay Rowe's article on page 2 of this newsletter.

The other big news is that the Trust is about to undertake a further translocation of chicks from the Kowhai colony in March. The Trust has recently received a permit from DoC for translocation for this year and next for bringing out 100 chicks in each of those years. This is the first time since 2008 that a translocation has been done and will over time boost the potential numbers of shearwater that will ultimately breed at the Kaikoura Peninsula colony. The Trust will be looking for volunteers to help with the breeding programme which will commence in early to mid-March and run for a little over a month. If you are interested in helping out with some bird feeding, please contact Jodie Denton on 03 3197344; or email her at: land-services@xtra.co.nz. Jodie can provide details of what you would need to bring, the nature of the work and the commitment required. Please note that up to seven volunteers are needed a day and a roster kept to ensure smooth running of the operation. This is hard but very rewarding work and an opportunity to participate in an exciting 'hands on' conservation project.

The Trust held its Annual General Meeting in November. I was elected Chairman again. I had offered to stand down as I felt unable to satisfactorily fulfil my obligations in that role last year due to the workload I had as a result of the Christchurch earthquakes. I was finally convinced by fellow Trustees to stand again. I thank fellow Trustees for the show of support and confidence in me continuing in that role. I also acknowledge fellow Trustees for just getting on with things in spite of my ability to contribute at times. Also elected were Jodie Denton (Secretary), Lindsay Rowe (Treasurer), and Trustees – Geoff Harrow, Andrew Spencer, Elspeth Wingham, Teri Sonal, Gina Solomon, Nicky McArthur, Mike Bell and Phil Bradfield. These Trustees are doing an amazing job for Hutton's shearwater and making a real contribution to the Kaikoura community through their efforts.

Continued on next page.....

Special points of interest

- Hutton's Myths and Legends by Suburban School
- Bird Study
- Amazing News– First Chick for the Peninsula
- Help us farewell the Hutton's Shearwater



The Hutton's Shearwater Charitable Trust is a Charities Commission registered entity CC37979.
Donations to the Trust attract tax credits.

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I acknowledge a generous grant received from the WWF New Zealand that is tagged for the translocation; and from the Lions Club of Kaikoura who have given \$1,000 this year and indicated they

will give the same amount next year. Ronald F Stead also recently donated \$1,000 toward the work of the Trust. Read about that in the newsletter also. The Trust also continues to receive gen-

erous support and donations from individuals which goes a long way in enabling the Trust to achieve it's goals. The Trust is also running a shortfall on the transloca-

tion and any donations or contributions would assist in making this two year project happen.

Paul McGahan
Chairman

First Chick at Kaikoura Peninsula Colony

The first shearwaters arrived back at the Peninsula colony at the beginning of October when they began occupying the nest boxes for this season. By early November, up to a dozen boxes were being visited between weekly checks. The good news for this season started on 6 November when eggs were found in boxes 97 and 37. On 19 November another egg was found in box 10, and box 55 had an egg on 25 November. Having 4 eggs this season is an increase on the 2 eggs last season and was a good sign. But the best was still to come. When I opened box 97 on a routine check on 28 December, looking at me was an adult and a chick that would have been a couple of days

old. A parent was still with the chick 3 days later but since 3 January the chick has been on its own during the daytime and growing nicely, weighing 210 g at 27 days old.

Although 4 eggs laid were, the other 3 have not hatched for reasons unknown. There has been a good number of birds returning this year. All 4 birds that we saw last year and that attempted breeding then are back, and 6 more were seen in boxes during the daytime checks, there may have been many more we have not seen. Since mid-December, birds have visited around 11 to 16 boxes between checks and 13 have been occupied regularly. Two birds have been seen in

different boxes so it is possible there are fewer pairs present than the number of boxes that have been visited regularly would suggest. Even so, there could be 20 or more breeding or prospecting birds about which bodes well for the next season. Night time visits would help confirm numbers but we have not been out there to avoid disturbing the birds.

Overall, the successes to date are making everybody's efforts very worthwhile and having our first chick depart for Australian waters in mid-March will be a tremendous milestone in the project.

Lindsay Rowe

Trustee



Above- Hutton's Shearwater with chick

Below- First Hutton Shearwater Chick for the Peninsula Colony



Become a *Friend Of*

We are always looking for new friends to join us in the journey of these amazing wee birds. If you are not already, it would be great to have you on board. We have structured the mem-

bership so as to make it feasible for everyone. You could join as an individual (\$20), a family (\$30), as a school (\$30), a corporate (\$125) or for life (\$300). Your contribution will

assist in the conservation of this endangered species, both at the newly established colony on the Kaikoura Peninsula and at the only other two remaining colonies (in the world) in the Seaward Kaikoura moun-

tains. You can find a membership form on our website or contact the secretary on 03 319 7344 or treasurer on 03 319 7211 or admin@huttonsshearwater.org.nz



Left- Fresh snow at the Kowhai Valley at beginning of December. Taken during a field trip at that time. Photo by Phil Bradfield

Right- A Penwiper (*Notothlaspi rosulatum*); one of the largest specimens recorded in the scree slopes of Shearwater Stream during a burrow scoping trip in November 2011" (Photo by Phil Bradfield).



Recent Donation

Roland F. Stead recently made a generous donation of \$1000 to our Trust. Roland is the son of one of New Zealand's noteworthy ornithologists, Edgar F. Stead, also famous for the creation of the Ilam Homestead and its wonderful rhododendron gardens.

The now extinct Stead's Bush Wren that died out on the islands south west of Stewart Island in the 1950's was named after Edgar Stead.

Edgar Stead had a lifelong interest in sea birds including shearwaters. He made many searches in the South Island mountains about a century ago looking for the nesting burrows of petrels, especially the Mottled Petrel. In his book "The life histories of New Zealand Birds", he describes that "...up to 1907 these petrels used to fly inland up the Rakaia River about sunset in considerable numbers during the summer

months...".

Roland Stead accompanied his father on the M.V Alert on several visits to off shore bird islands during the 1930's, and in 1933, landed on the Hen Island, which held, the only population of North Island Saddlebacks at that time. It was during this visit that the Stead's urged Dr. Robert Falla to translocate some of the endangered Saddlebacks to other

safe off shore islands. This may well have been the gem of an idea that has led up to all the recent endangered bird transfers.

Thank you Roland Stead for your much appreciated donation, which will be wisely spent on the translocation of more Hutton's Shearwater chicks to the Kaikoura Peninsula Colony.

Geoff Harrow- Trustee

Kaikoura Suburban School & Hutton's

The Shearwater class at Suburban school have been learning about Maori legends and myths. The class have enjoyed so many local and national legends that they have been inspired to create their own myths of how the Hutton's shearwater came to nest around Mt Fyffe, Kaikoura, and then migrate to Australia waters to over winter there.

They shared their myths with the Trust and although they were all very good, we would like to share one with you.

The God of the Forest Tane Mahuta gave all of his powers to the forest. Two birds had their homes in the forest because Tane's powers kept the forest green and healthy.

One day Titi decided that he wanted to see the rest of the spirit world at the bottom of Mt Fyffe. So one night he decided that he was going to take off and find his way to the sea. He went to tell Tane Mahuta that he was going to see the sea. But Tane told him that he had to wait for two

weeks, and then he could go. So Titi went back to his house to wait.

Finally the day came that he was allowed to fly to sea. Feeling really excited, he went straight there and made friends with a whale. The whale's name was Mahuka and Titi thought that was a really nice name. Then they both heard Titi's tummy rumble loudly. Mahuka said "Try some food!" "What is it?" said Titi. "It is fish and krill fresh from the ocean", said Mahuka.

Titi tried the fish and it was delicious! But when he trised the krill he spat it out and back into the sea. Mahuka said, "Don't you like it?" "No way, it tickles my mouth. How can you even swallow it?" giggled Titi. "I love it. It's the only food I eat" said Mahuka. They ate so much that they had to have a sleep. When they finally woke up they found they had been asleep for a week!

Titi was full of energy and

started having fun by jumping off Mahuka's back. They laughed; then they sat on the water and ate some more. A Whale Watch boat cruised by and watched for a while. When it went to move off Titi flew up onto the boat for a closer look and to let people take photos of him.

That night, when it started to get dark again, Mahuka felt tired. Titi knew it was time for him to go. He said "Goodbye for now, but I will see you soon".

When Titi got home he realised that it wasn't long until the Titi's go to Australia for winter. His tummy rumbled so he decided to eat the food he had always eaten before he went to sea. He caught a couple of insects. But he spat them straight out because they tasted so horrible. He decided that he would always eat from the sea from now on, but always live on Mt Fyffe.

It was time to go to Australia. It was a really long flight, but worth it because Titi met the most beautiful Titi ever! Her name was Alena and they fell in love straight away. They had a beautiful time in Australia eating fish and watching the coastline. At the end of winter they flew back to Mt Fyffe together. Alena laid her eggs and they lived happily ever after!

By C.F Kaikoura Suburban School



Bird study helps pupils fly high

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

Year 9 pupils would 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" he said.

"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 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" according to Bill.

"I want to expand the idea because it was such a success this year in the science and math's 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.

School teacher Bill Lonsdale is passionate about nature, particularly Hutton's Shearwater



Quirky Keas

Hutton's History

By Geoff Harrow

Stay tuned for Geoff's often amusing recollections of 'earlier days' in the world of the Hut-

Sir David Attenborough and his BBC wildlife television film crew spent some time with *Richard Cuthbert at the Kowhai Research hut & the Hutton's Shearwater colony during January 1997.

While the BBC crew were making their Shearwater

documentary their attention was drawn to very unusual behaviour of Keas. The Keas were picking out parts of the Shearwater colony devoid of plants and listening for chirping of the shearwater chicks.

Once the Keas were certain they were right above the nest chamber they would dig with their massive curved beaks until they had the Shearwater chick out for a tasty, fatty meal. Sir David made the point that it was highly unusual for parrots to eat meat. He was aware of Kea's having been filmed killing high coun-

try sheep trapped in snow, and then eating the sheep's kidney fat. He also knew of some parrots eating grubs but it was entirely new to him for a parrot to kill another species for food.

When the BBC film was shown on New Zealand television, my telephone rang immediately after the programme with my friends asking why I hadn't told them about this interesting Kea behaviour. My reply was that I have never seen such behaviour and it must be extremely rare and could only

happen in a few bare patches in the shearwater breeding grounds. I don't think Richard Cuthbert had noted this Kea activity before either.

(*Richard Cuthbert along with Erica Somers wrote 'Ten year assessment on the status and conservation of the Hutton's Shearwaters' in July 2009 for the Department of Conservation. The creation of a third colony was one of their recommendations from this paper.)

Geoff Harrow—Trustee

Farewell to the **Hutton's Shearwaters**

“Haere Ra Nga Titi”

Saturday 31st March & Sunday 1st April 2012

Saturday

5.00 pm Mayfair Theatre for refreshments, Mix & Mingle

5.30 pm Opening & Welcome

- Guest Speakers

Mark Solomon (Kaiwhakahaere of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu)

Sam Mahon (author, artist and avid conservationist)

- Charity Auction (AMAZING offers from generous sponsors)

- Local Premiere of our very own Hutton's

Shearwater Documentary - admission \$20.00

Sunday

6.45 am Gather at South Bay Reserve

7.00 am Walk to Peninsula Colony for farewell ceremony

- Return to South Bay Coastguard building for a BBQ breakfast of bacon butties, tea and coffee

- Short presentation and scientific updates

- Mid morning finish



The Hutton's Shearwater Trust
will acknowledge Earth Hour
on Saturday evening

 **Hutton's Shearwater**
CHARITABLE TRUST

All Welcome

For catering, if possible please RSVP to: PO Box 58 Kaikoura 7340
or admin@huttonsshearwater.org.nz by Friday 30th March

Hutton's Housekeeping

Kaikoura's 100th A&P Show Saturday 25th February—we will be there in force to help mark this special occasion. Come along and have a chat and get yourself one of our new Hutton's Shearwater Charitable Trust polo shirts, hot off the press—we would love to see you there.

The Internet Age—Facebook—we have joined the latest craze (is it still the latest?!). Feel free to look us

up (Hutton's Shearwater (Official)), 'like' us and keep up to date with what's going on. Our webpage is also a great way to keep in touch.

Keeping it sharp - If you have any suggestions for us about anything really, we would love to hear from you. As with most things, there is always room for improvement and that's great info to have.

Merchandise—we have our

great (and very popular) T-shirts for sale in a range of colours (army green, white, navy & hot pink) and we have added adult polo shirts to the range. Due to popular demand we now also have a small number of kids t-shirts in hot pink and navy for 2, 4 & 6 year olds. If you are interested contact our treasurer on 033197211 or on admin@huttonsshearwater.org.nz

We are also looking to add

caps to the range, so watch out for those in a while.

Saturday 31st March also marks the day for 'Earth Hour'. The Trust will be acknowledging and supporting this worthy cause.



Project partners and sponsors

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



KAIKOURA DISTRICT COUNCIL



FOREST & BIRD



WHALE WATCH
KAIKOURA NEW ZEALAND

Microsoft
Research



Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

This newsletter is kindly put together and printed by Jess Bailey at Whale Watch Kaikoura on recycled paper. Please share this newsletter by email where possible to reduce paper use.

Trust contact details

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

The Hutton's Shearwater Charitable Trust is a Charities Commission registered entity CC37979. Donations to the Trust attract tax credits.

Hutton's Shearwater Charitable Trust, PO Box 58, Kaikoura 7340. www.huttonsshearwater.org.nz