



MOTUORA RESTORATION SOCIETY (INC)

PO Box 100132, North Shore
Auckland 0745

www.motuora.org.nz

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MRS honoured by international ecological restoration society



Motuora Restoration Society has recently been honoured to receive an inaugural award from the Society for Ecological Restoration (SER). We shared the 2016 Award in Restoration Excellence for a large project (over 50 ha) with two other projects, one of which was Motutapu Restoration Trust. The award includes a certificate, an engraved glass trophy and a cheque for A\$1,500. The SER operates over the Australasian Region. The photo shows chairperson John Stewart receiving the award at a ceremony held in Hamilton in November. Our thanks go to the SER for the award and the associated recognition it brings and to Dr Jacqueline Beggs of Auckland University who nominated us.

Sea Bird Monitoring - Great News

We have an egg! On arrival on the Island on the 9th December, Morag and Simon Fordham began with a check of the Pycroft's petrel burrows and found a bird incubating an egg in box 53. The band number was 207309. This bird had spent time in box 53 last year with its (presumed) partner 207318. If all goes well this will be our first Pycroft's chick to hatch on the Island.

We have a chick! When Morag and Simon moved on to the fluttering shearwater boxes they discovered that the egg found by John and Kay in October in box 7 has hatched. Sadly, an egg in box 1 seems to have disappeared. However, it's good that box 7 is going well as that one is in the new area we opened up last year hoping to tempt the birds away from the dangerous cliff-top sites.

Photo shows adult Pycroft's found in box 61 by John and Kay on 30th October. It was in the same burrow last year and is a bird from the first cohort brought to Motuora as a chick in 2012.



Gannet Activity

There are 15 pairs of gannets, 12 with a chick and 2 still on an egg. This small colony had it's beginnings with the installation of gannet decoys and an audio attraction system in 2010.



Wetapunga Update

Dr Chris Green

The recent trip to the island on 30th October 2016 featured another milestone in the journey of confirming an established wetapunga population on Motuora. Whilst checking the remaining bamboo refuges at the Pohutukawa Bay release site I found two sub-adults (one more moult to become adult), a female and male in separate locations. Both these wetapunga are proof of the first island-bred generation at this release site. Their parents would have been from the 381 wetapunga released there in April and June 2014. Both of these sub-adults will mature into adults and begin mating and laying the next generation during late summer and autumn in early 2017. This discovery augments the record of the first island bred generation at the Macrocarpa Bay release site recorded in MRS Newsletter #60 a year ago. It is planned to set up a grid of tracking tunnels at the Pohutukawa Bay release site next winter to confirm adult activity.



The photo features a calmed down adult female wetapunga.

Also, on the same trip I checked the bamboos at the third release site at Snake Gully and was surprised to find an adult female in residence. This was somewhat unexpected as the adults don't have a good track record of using the refuges. The wetapunga was not amused at my attentions and came reversing out of the refuge in order to perform a hissy-fit at me - repeatedly flicking her back legs in my direction! I backed off to allow her to recover some composure. This is a useful record to confirm that some of the 100 wetapunga released there on November 2015 are still present and are likely mating and laying.

THANK YOU

Bridgestone Ltd. for sponsorship.
Terranova Planning for sponsorship.
Agpro NZ Ltd for herbicides.
Yates NZ for ongoing support with propagation supplies.
Kawau Cruises for support with transport costs.
Simon Chamberlin for a donation towards work on the island.
Heseltine Trust for a donation towards the cost of work on the island.

Generous bequest received

We are pleased to acknowledge a generous bequest from the estate of Lois McCracken. Lois was a very early member of the Restoration Society and of the Forest and Bird group who initiated our project many years ago. Founder member and Chairperson Les Buckton recalls Lois visiting in those early days, her delight in the Island and her on-going enthusiasm for the restoration project.

Weed update from Helen Lindsay - things are looking really good.

I had a good week doing the weeding on the island in early November and things are looking really good on that front. The work carried out by Island Managers Vonny Sprey and Eliane Lagnaz over the last couple of years has really built on what was done by Sian and Toby Shanley during 2012-14. Many areas are really clear of target weeds and I found hardly any climbing asparagus fern.

Opportunity to join on Island Visits

After a slightly hesitant beginning, a series of visits to the Island have been organised for members of the seabird monitoring team. The schedule of visits outlined in the August Newsletter turned out not to suit very many people so we have adopted a more flexible approach to the visit dates. At the time of writing, the roster looks like this:

Dates	Personnel
9 th - 11 th Dec	Morag & Simon
16 th - 18 th Dec	Ngairi & Kathy
28 th - 30 th Dec	John & Kay
6 th - 8 th Jan	Karin & Aaron
13 th - 15 th Jan	Shaun & Cheryl
20 th - 22 nd Jan	Eva & Juan
4 th - 6 th Feb	Karin & Rob

As there are only two people booked onto these trips there will be space for one or two more visitors either to gain experience with the seabird work or to carry out other tasks such as nursery and weed work. We are also willing to book more trips on other dates either between or after the ones listed here. E-mail John on johnreastewart@gmail.com to discuss a possible visit.

Motuora Restoration Society The Society is undertaking the restoration of native forest to create habitat for endangered and absent common species on the island, and translocating such fauna and flora. Membership is \$25 per year for individuals or families, and \$5 for students.	<i>Chair</i> John Stewart 09 428 4541	Bruce Ross 09 445 1140
	<i>Secretary</i> Liz Norquay 09 424 7444	Helen Lindsay 03 528 4020
	<i>Treasurer</i> Nattu Nataraj 09 624 6247	Roger Harker 09 6366507
	Les Buckton 09 425 9619	Colin Cordes 09 638 7726
	Kevin Hawkins 09 424 7444	
Charities Commission Number CC 10250		
www.motuora.org.nz		

Welcome back Dave Jenkins

Department of Conservation has recently gone through a realignment of the Auckland region boundaries and now has Island District and Mainland District. Motuora comes under scope of Operations Manager for Auckland Inner Islands Keith Gell.

Dave Jenkins has taken up the role of DOC Ranger on Motuora after nine years as Ranger on Tiri Tiri Matangi. Back in 2004 he was the first Island Manager employed by Motuora Restoration Society and spent three and a half years with us then. The infrastructure, flora and fauna and visitors will all benefit from Dave's breadth of knowledge and generous nature.

DOC Ranger Motuora

0274 053 352