



BRING BACK KOKAKO

For more about bringing back Kokako to GBI, see our website or give us a call.

Three late summer flowers on Great Barrier.



Ox-eye daisy (*Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*)

This white daisy is common along tracks in the southern half of Great Barrier in late summer. It is introduced from Britain, where it is a common wild flower in pastures and on road verges.

the ancestor of the carrot we eat. If you pull one up you'll find it smells like a carrot, even tastes like one too – but very woody (see photo). Its Latin name is *Daucus carota*, so when you call someone a dawkus you're calling them a wizened white woody carrot!



Dump creeper (*Ipomoea cairica*)

This pretty 'convolvulus' with pale pink or purple flowers grows at the Claris Waste Facility (a.k.a. "dump") and a few other places on GBI and in Northland. It is a native to New Zealand but a rare plant. However, it seems to thrive at the dump despite the rough treatment it gets! Don't confuse this with pink convolvulus or blue morning glory – note the five-finger leaves.



Wild Carrot (*Daucus carota*)

This plant is also introduced from Britain, flowering in late summer on Great Barrier road-sides. It has a little white tap-root which is

For Sale:
Bird prevention window decals - \$30 plus postage
\$2.50 email: gbitrust@xtra.co.nz or
phone: 094290940

Notice Board

- Local Board Environmental Committee: 26 Mar, 22 April, 27 May, 24 June, 22 July, 26 Aug, 23 Sept, 28 Oct, 25 Nov, 23 Dec
- Local Board meetings: 12 Mar, 8 April, 13 May, 10 June, 8 July, 12 Aug, 9 Sept, 14 Oct, 11 Nov, 9 Dec

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BUSH TELEGRAPH

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Issue 10: March 2014

Welcome to GBI Environmental Trust Patron



Anne & Jeremy Salmond February 2014

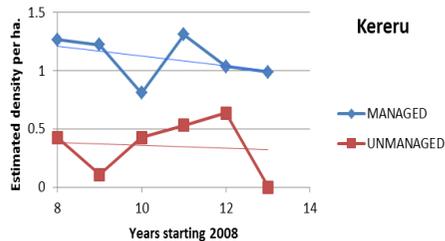
The GBI Environmental Trust is honoured that Anne enthusiastically agreed to become our Patron. She stressed the point that people, past, present and future, are real components of the ecology. The actions of people and their institutions have shaped our current ecosystems and determined how we value them. People are not to be seen solely as the cause of our problems but rather people are part of an interacting whole. People will determine what we leave as our legacy. Communities working together in an inclusive way towards agreed goals can achieve what is otherwise impossible. Equally important, working inclusively and with mutual respect, we can have a lot of fun doing it!

This month the GBI Environmental Trust hosted a visit from Distinguished Professor Dame Anne Salmond, New Zealander of the Year for 2013. Anne is one of New Zealand's most prominent anthropologists and historians, and has written many popular and academic books about Polynesian and Pakeha history. She received the CBE for services to literature and the Maori people in 1988 and was made Dame Commander of the British Empire for services to New Zealand history in 1995. Anne has also chaired the Historic Places Trust and her husband, Jeremy, is a leading conservation architect. They both enjoyed their day tour of the northern end of the Island, and especially their short time at Fitzroy House and Glenfern Sanctuary. Anne and Jeremy run a similar ecological sanctuary at Longbush near Gisborne (www.Longbushecosanctuary) and share the problems of pest invasions and monitoring ecosystem restoration.

Kereru numbers crash following drought.

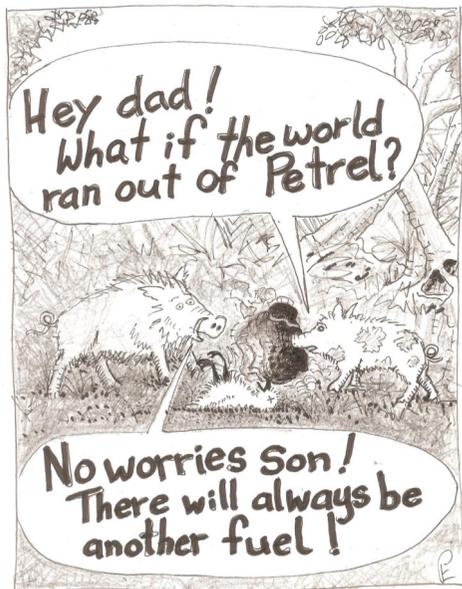
Last summer there was a prolonged drought followed by a drier warmer winter. This type of weather event, profoundly disturbs the amount of food available in the forest, for birds in particular. At the same time the rats happily breed up and out-compete the birds for what little food is available. Our local bird rescue person, Karen Walker, will confirm that many of the birds brought in to her during and after droughts are starving. In the Windy Hill Sanctuary, we have been monitoring birds since 2000. Each December we count the birds seen and heard for 3 minutes at 32 stations positioned throughout the Sanctuary. Each station is visited 6 times over a 10 day period. At the same time we also count the birds at 8 stations that are positioned in areas that have no pest management so we can find out how they are faring. The results from last December are alarming – all bird species have declined,

particularly kereru, even in the Sanctuary which will have had much more food available because rats have been kept to very low numbers. In the unmanaged control sites, the kereru are completely absent. The graph below tells the story.



This will have been the reality throughout the Island. While you will still see kereru, we need to remember that these are long-lived birds that are irregular breeders and most of their poorly built nests will be visited by rats. Very few will be successfully breeding, except in the sanctuaries at Windy Hill, Glenfern, and Motuhaku, and replacing the ones that die off during a drought.

Judy Gilbert



Penguin Boxes

My name is Charlotte Thomas and I am 12 years old and I have been coming to Great Barrier for my entire life. It is my favourite place. Whenever dad and I go out in our boat, we usually see Little Blue Penguins in the water so I was surprised that I had never ever seen them on land, night or day!

Some Barrier residents that I have spoken to used to see them regularly on the rocks and on the roads at night. Some even had them living under their houses.

So why haven't I seen them? I did some research and found that the main threat to Little Blue Penguin are cats, dogs, cars, rats and mustelids (ferrets and stoats which fortunately Gt Barrier does not have). Humans are responsible for most of these threats and I think we have driven penguins away from parts of the Barrier where we have baches, cars and predators.

I suspect that any penguin that comes ashore to look for a safe place to nest is soon disturbed by cats and dogs. They are likely to be eaten or scared away and left to find somewhere else to breed.

Our family decided we wanted to give penguins a chance to return to the area and breed. This can be done by providing them with purpose built nesting boxes. We found a tested and proved plan on the D.O.C website and got to work. (<http://tinyurl.com/kcsuuh3>)

We made nine boxes from treated timber and some from local macrocarpa so they will last a long time. The design has a long tunnel entrance that helps stop dogs and cats getting in and there are two ventilation holes to stop the inside from getting too damp. It is recommended that you put a large rock lid as the penguin can get quite physical during courtship and defending their territory.

I made a stencil and we sprayed **PENGUINS DO NOT DISTURB** on the top of the boxes so they can nest in peace. We have put two boxes in Schooner Bay where we were told penguins have tried to nest before and a couple in Puriri Bay. The rest have been spread along Gooseberry Flat. Little Blue Penguins usually lay two eggs

between September and November which are incubated for 36 days. Once hatched, they are cared for by the parents for the first 3–5 weeks and become totally independent after about 8 weeks. Penguins will start breeding at 2-3 years and will return to the same place they were born. There has already been plenty of success using nesting



boxes in other parts of the country and hopefully our boxes will be used and we will see the return of the Little Blue Penguin to places where we can see them.

Charlotte Thomas

Concern for penguin

As an Awana local I was very disappointed to read about the penguin being killed at Awana.

I visited Awana beach almost daily over the holidays and observed that the dog exercise area rules are unenforceable, and ignored by the majority of dog owners. Dogs are not properly controlled - often there are 3-4 dogs at a time left to run around chasing birds and each other while owners ignore them. Many go to Pohutukawa Bay, or run along the beach and up the estuary, both of which are outside the official area. There was dog faeces all down the public entrance track to the beach, where I was confronted by a young pit bull. Despite the proliferation of signs, most plead ignorance when you point out they are outside the exercise area. We won't have any dotterels, penguins or anything else soon.

Our wildlife should take precedence and, if people don't like it, there are plenty of other places they can go on holiday with their dog.

June Brookes

Summer visitors

Tourists are not the only summer visitors on Great Barrier – there are some interesting birds too!

This summer there has been a white Royal Spoonbill (Kotuku Ngutupapa) at Whangaparapara, sometimes two. Although they've been recorded here before, this bird has just about become a resident. It can usually be found either feeding on the mud-flats near the creek at low tide, or perched in a tree with shags when the tide is in (see photos and item in Bush Telegraph #8, September 2013). Thanks to all those who sent me reports of this bird – please keep the information flowing!

Also, although it has been known that Long-tailed Cuckoos (Koekoeko) sometimes stay with us for the summer, this year there has been one near the start of the Windy Canyon track since November. It will probably leave for the tropical Pacific Islands (where it spends our winter) in March, so get up to Windy Canyon soon if you'd like to see or hear it. It looks a like a brown Falcon or Hawk, with a long tail, and makes a harsh drawn out croaking sort of noise, sometimes rendered as "zzzwheesh". Like other cuckoos it lays its eggs in the nests of other birds, which then act as foster mothers and fathers. Normally this parasitism is on Whiteheads, but as these birds are now extinct on Great Barrier it is not known if Long-tailed Cuckoos here parasitise other birds, or if they breed at all.

John Ogden.

Fishing Competition donation

This is the second year that the Great Barrier Island Environmental Trust has been the beneficiary of the Medlands Annual Fishing Competition. The support of this group of people is very much appreciated.

You are invited to bird watch

John Ogden invites interested people to join him on Saturday 22nd March at 10am on Whangapoua Beach.

Bookings essential phone 09 4290980