

Barrier juniors' environmental efforts lauded



Top Left: Kevin Beatty-Cabaret of Okiwi School receiving the 2008 Conservation Prize from Jacqui Ackland and Brian Reed. Kevin was notable during the year for his enthusiastic participation in the school conservation activities. With the help of Helena Jamieson Kevin confirmed the presence of the "Auckland Green Gecko" in the Medlands area.



Top right: Tairone Blackwell was awarded the Environmental Award at Kaitoke School at our end of year school concert. Tairone is the 'essence of the Barrier' with his caring attitude towards the wildlife and local environment – beach, bush & birds.



Left: Trustee Fenella Christian presents Oriana Maynard the GBI Trust Caring for the Environment Trophy at the Mulberry Grove School Prize giving 2008

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GBI Environmental News

The publication of the Great Barrier Island Charitable Trust, whose trustees are:
John Ogden (Chair), Tony Bouzaid, Jude Gilbert, Liz Westbrooke, Jo Ritchie, Sue Daly
Fenella Christian (Secretary). David Speir is Magazine Editor



State of the Environment Report Ten Years of Work at LWH • Dune Restoration

Mission Statement: Our vision is to protect native species through the eradication of rats and feral cats, to re-introduce species lost to the Island, and to work towards building an ecology-based economic framework for Great Barrier Island.

Mulberry Grove Community Rat Project

BY JUDE GILBERT

The Mulberry Grove Community Rat Project was launched in late February. About fifteen residents attended the launch meeting, opened by GBI Trust chair John Ogden, and hailed as the first urban community trapping project on Island. Residents in the bay area which covers 96 properties will have commenced intensive trapping of rats in March. The goal is to reduce the impact of rats and in doing so give the native plant and bird species of the area a better opportunity to flourish.

This coastal area abundant with pohutukawa and flax attracts a variety of bird species, particularly tui and kaka. Ralls are also seen frequently.

The project was initiated by the Great Barrier Island Trust, with Judy Gilbert from the Trust, and Des Casey from DoC taking the idea for a community rat project to local landowners in November 2008. Local residents were enthusiastic and appointed Cathy Scott to coordinate the project including the deployment of equipment onto each property, the stock of equipment required, and the results of the trapping.

As part of the project a trapping programme has already been established at Mulberry Grove School with a local person checking and baiting traps on a regular basis. The need for consistent trapping to get rat numbers down and keep them low was stressed at the meeting.

Sponsorship has been provided by the ARC for rat traps; the Windy Hill Rosalie Bay Catchment Trust for trap covers, string, and monitoring



Judy Gilbert at Mulberry Grove.

tunnels; and the coordination of landowners and provision of maps through Des Casey from DoC. Mulberry Grove School has also sponsored a meeting room and some printing costs. Bait for traps are to be supplied by the landowner.

Thank you to all sponsors.

A set of 10 rat tracking tunnels has been established through the bay area and a pre-management monitor done in December showed a 20% result and a second in February showed a 45% result. Tracking

Continued on page 5

COVER PHOTO

A reminder: Populations of the black rat are at their seasonal peak on GBI now, and apart from your wiring, the figs, the chook food and the apples, this is what they really like to eat.

Photo: Courtesy of Nga Manu Images – Picture by Richard Mudge

Report on the:

“State of the GBI Environment Report”

BY JOHN OGDEN

At Mulberry Grove beach, in February this year enterococci counts exceeded the Ministry for the Environment’s guideline of 140 enterococci per 100 mls of seawater level on two of the four monitoring days (ACC website). Retesting gave lower values, but, combined with algal blooms (see ENV NEWS 15) in the area, the results are cause for concern. DoC’s Island-wide brown teal counts were down in 2008 compared to previous years, perhaps coinciding with an outbreak of colesi virus reducing the numbers of rabbits and hence causing ‘prey switching’ (to ducklings) by harrier hawks. Deer, pigs, rats and cats may have been eliminated from Kaikoura Island, and a rat-proof fence has been erected at Glenfern Sanctuary. Kanuka scrub may turn out to be a valuable asset for saleable ‘carbon credits’, but then again, it might not. The Island’s human population has declined since the previous census, to the point where essential services are threatened. On the other hand

tourist numbers may be up, and there appear to be more cars on better roads. About 70 new building permits were issued every year from 2000 to 2004, but since then the level has dropped to about 50 – still nearly one a week. These and many other issues are all about the environment in which we live. The Resource Management Act (however it might be altered in future) requires us as

individuals, and the statutory authorities who act on our behalf, to take account of our impacts on the environment. The elimination of such major pests as rats and cats, throughout Great Barrier, would have repercussions on many aspects of the biological, physical and social environment on the Island. A charitable trust pressing for serious consideration of such a plan runs into serious issues regarding its relationships with all the authorities and individuals that must be involved, including of course the elected Community Board. This reasoning led us, in 2007, to propose writing a “State of the Environment Report” (SOE) for the Island. An SOE is meant to provide a factual snapshot of the current health of the environment, to identify trends and indicate possible solutions or areas where more data are required. Most, if not all, SOEs have been produced by government agencies or regional bodies, such as the ARC. The most recent, and relevant, is that on the state of the environment in the Hauraki Gulf by the Hauraki Gulf Forum (H.G.F. June 2008; available on line as a summary or in full: www.arc.govt.nz/albany/). So, as a bunch of amateurs, we started on the SOE for Great Barrier in early 2008 and soon realised what a huge – almost limitless – task we had set ourselves. There are so many aspects to what we mean by “environ-

ment" and the factual data are continuously changing, so that what is 'true' today, may not be so in six month's time. Also there is so much data on some topics, and so little on others, and some is easy to get, and some is not. All I can say is that we are doing our best; we know we will miss some things and be out-of-date with others. Our aim is to produce a document which can be added to and improved on in future, but will have value as a summary of the current state of environmental trends on Great Barrier, and as a resource for information.

Liz Westbrook has compiled the data for the first four chapters, which are almost finished. The introduction draws attention to the unique nature of the Island's biota and the risks it faces. Chapter 2 ('Place and People') deals with the physical environment and with population issues. Liz compiled old climate records to give a better picture of

our changing weather patterns. However, the drivers for environmental change are mostly related to human activities; human demography shows the population peak (c. 1200) in the late 1990s, the fall since then, and the rapid shift to a population dominated by the over-50 age-group (Fig 1). Median house prices have doubled over the same period. Chapter 3 describes production and consumption patterns, beginning with a 'bullet point' historical survey. "Commercially sensitive", but vitally important data, such as the consumption of petrol and diesel proved impossible to get. Information concerning vehicle registrations in 2008 on the Island had to be purchased from the Land Transport Safety Authority. Getting anything factual about the Island's economy has not been easy.

Chapter 4 covers Environmental Management and outlines the (often contentious) roles of

Auckland City Council, Auckland Regional Council, the Department of Conservation and the Hauraki Gulf Forum. Great Barrier Island comprises 44% of Auckland City's land, but the population is only 0.2% of the City's! The Department of Conservation manage two-thirds of GBI, described by them as "one of the region's last great wilderness areas". (Wilderness with boardwalks? A re-classification might be in order). ARC works with DoC on pest management and biosecurity.

Chapters 5 and 6 deal with the vegetation and flora of the Island, drawing together and summarising unpublished information. Detail lists of species are relegated to Appendices. Stress is placed on the long-term but on-going changes as kanuka scrub turns to forest, or wetlands are drained. Rare plant species are mentioned and a list of the most important 'environmental weeds' presented. There is also a Chapter on carbon sequestration which discusses the potential monetary value of kanuka scrub. Three Chapters (7, 8, 9) deal with invertebrates,

reptiles and frogs, and marine life. The Island has a particularly rich fauna of small land snails, and thirteen different kinds of lizards! The endangered tiny Hochstetter's frog is still present in very small numbers, but tuatara, present on several sea-stacks and off-shore Islands within living memory, have probably become extinct. Marine life is a big issue, which we can only cover in a summarised format; a great deal of relevance has been covered in more detail in the SOE for the Hauraki Gulf (see also the first

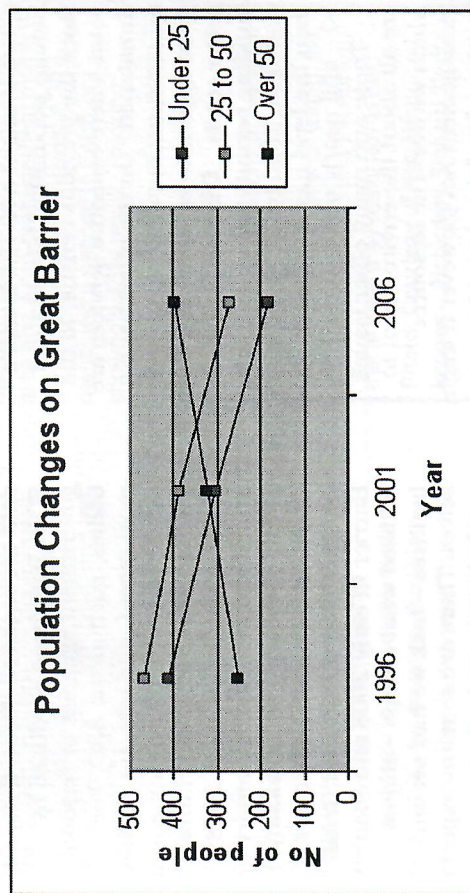
The Resource Management Act... requires us as individuals, and the statutory authorities who act on our behalf, to take account of our impacts on the environment.

H.G.F. SOE, 2004).

I am currently working on the Birds Chapter, drawing together historic data showing how we compare with New Zealand trends generally (Fig 2). Counts of common birds from the GBICT's counts (see previous issues of ENV NEWS), data from counts at Windy Hill and Glenfern Sanctuary, and other information will be summarised. I will be stressing the (mostly downwards) trends in the data for our iconic rarities (brown teal, black petrel, New Zealand dotterel) and drawing attention to how little we know about trends in other species, such as kaka, kakariki, tomtit, banded rail, bittern, reef heron, fern bird etc. Common 'predators', such as harrier hawks, pukeko and morepoke owl also deserve more study. My bird data base currently includes 113 species for Great Barrier, but 13 of these are probably now extinct here or were erroneously recorded. However, the Island and its surrounding seas have c. 100 bird species, which is roughly a third of the entire New Zealand list (excluding extinct species).

The final two Chapters discuss

Fig 1. The changing work force on Great Barrier: ten years 1996–2006.



Lizard Research at Windy Hill

BY JUDE GILBERT

There have been around 14 species of lizards identified on Barrier. Skinks and geckos are present in many places on the island but little is known about how well they are surviving with our high numbers of rats and feral cats. Like lizards all over the world they are difficult to monitor, being shy and often well camouflaged creatures.

In January 2007 Trent Bell from Landcare Research established 300 foam artificial covers onto trees at Windy Hill and Benthorn Farm within the Windy Hill Rosalie Bay Catchment Trust sanctuary area where rats and feral cats are managed to low densities. The objective of the project is to establish a method that allows for more effective monitoring of lizard presence and densities, particularly where numbers of animals are known to be at low levels. The current methods of trapping and night spotting are time consuming and the results often inconclusive.

Windy Hill is part of a three site research project taking place here on Great Barrier, on pest-free Fanal Is. in the Mokohinaus, and at Karori Sanctuary in Wellington. The trial has so far found that certain types of gecko will use the covers, Pacific geckos at Windy Hill and Forest geckos at Karori. As would be expected at Fanal island where lizard

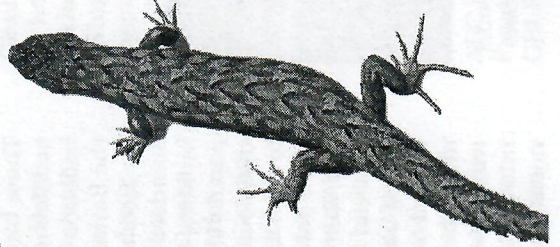


Photo by Helema Jamieson

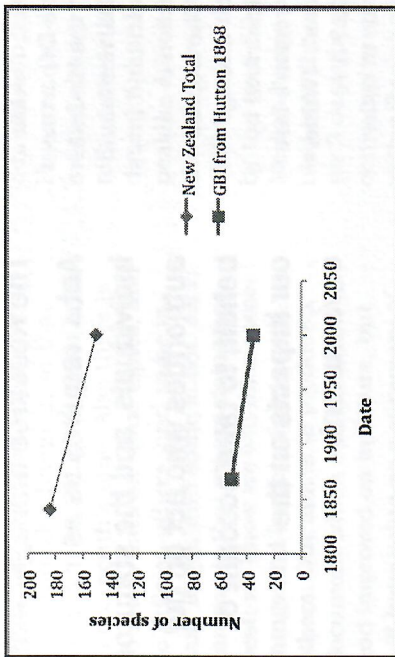
numbers are very high, a range of lizards use the covers including the rare Duvaucels.

At Windy Hill and Benthorn Farm Trent found that small numbers of Pacific gecko (9 in 2008, 18 in 2009) and some sub-adults were present which indicated successful breeding. Covers are currently set out in transects (long lines) and later this year Trent hopes to establish clusters of the covers around the place on the transects where geckos were found. This way he hopes to get a better idea of the numbers of geckos present. Most lizards breed very slowly and more so when the numbers of breeding adults are much reduced through long term predation.

Landcare Research has been granted funding to continue and expand this research as part of a Government initiative to increase the populations of iconic species, such as lizards, by 25%. The Windy Hill Rosalie Bay Catchment Trust also monitors lizards using layers of Onduline to form lizard 'motels' and has found that Ornate lizards use these exclusively to other lizard species.

The benefit to the Trust and the Island of the Landcare Research is the increased knowledge gained about the lizard populations here, the opportunity to work with an expert in his field, and the opportunity to contribute to science that may be applicable both in NZ and worldwide. A full report will be published in 2013.

Fig 2. Indigenous bird species extinction rate on Great Barrier Island compared with the overall New Zealand rate, since the arrival of Europeans.



(NZ data from Tennyson, A. & Martinson, P. 2006. Extinct Birds of New Zealand. Te Papa Press. Pp 180.; GBI data from Hutton, F. W. 1869. Trans. & Proc. NZ Institute vol 1. (Hutton visited GBI in 1868)).

the threats to the biodiversity posed by vertebrate pests, and some of the options and problems presented in their control or elimination. Linkages between these and the human economy are

alluded to.

The final section will summarise the "State of Great Barrier Island's Environment" and emphasise the main findings of our survey.

Continued from page 1

Mulberry Grove Community Rat Project

tunnels are a means of measuring rat activity in an area and the number of pre-linked pads (left overnight in a tunnel baited with peanut butter) that have rat prints marked on them can be worked to a percentage which indicates levels of rat activity. DoC in its Mainland Island conservation projects strives for a <5% tracking tunnel rate. In autumn a seasonal bulge of rats is generally observed with rats' numbers peaking in March and April – so throughout this period traps need to be checked, reset, and baited freshly at least weekly.

At the meeting a data sheet was supplied to each participant so that a record of the number of catches per month can be kept and a data base of

trapping information developed. There is to be a prize for the most rats caught in March.

Of the 96 properties in the bay area there are around 25 residents and it is hoped that these people will, with the permission of the owners, manage a number of nonresident properties to ensure good trapping coverage of the entire area.

With the interest shown by the community it is planned to expand the project to include a fresh water stream and rail monitoring programme.

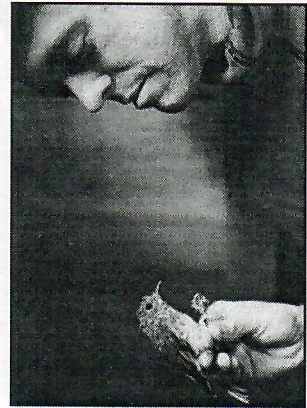
It is also hoped that other communities on island will be motivated to establish collectively organized trapping programmes. For more information contact Cathy Scott (082)

More North Island Robins for Great Barrier

BY JUDE GILBERT

By the time this newsletter goes to press 50 more North Island Robins will have been translocated from Mokoia Island in Lake Rotorua to Aotea. This is a 'booster' translocation to add to the robins that were released at Windy Hill in 2004 and Glenfern Sanctuary in 2005. Since that time over 100 robin chicks have fledged in the sanctuary areas with some remaining to form new pairs and others moving out into the island. A small population, possibly four or five birds, has established a territory up near Mt Hobson. Three robins with leg bands which identify them as having come from Windy Hill have been seen at Mt Hobson and a couple of un-banded birds have also been seen which means at least some are breeding successfully.

Prior to the earlier translocation robins were last seen on the island in 1860 and classified as regionally extinct.



Kevin Parker, translocation leader, bands, sexes and ages the robins to be moved.



Okiriri school children with their caged robins line up on a Glenfern Sanctuary bridge in preparation for the release.

Photo: IslandStay

These birds along with saddlebacks, kokako, and bellbirds have disappeared from the Barrier due to rat predation.

'Booster' translocations are a standard practice to assist the building of a viable self-sustaining population. It is hoped that this translocation, with 25 birds going to each sanctuary area, will create more pairs within the Glenfern and Windy Hill sanctuary areas that can breed successfully. Once young birds have fledged they are chased out of the parents territory and either move to a new area within the sanctuary or go out into the greater island area. Robin nests have been found at Shoal

Bay, and birds seen at Whangaparapara, Station Rock, and Medlands from time to time.

A team made up of local people, local and Rotorua DoC personnel, and translocation consultant Kevin Parker plan to take three days to harvest the birds from rat-free Mokoia Island before transporting them to Rotorua airport, where Great Barrier Airlines is to sponsor a direct flight to Claris. The birds are housed and transported in modified cardboard cat boxes which have a perch fitted and are supplied with food and water. A powhiri to welcome the birds is planned on arrival at the airport

BRIEFS

Juvenile tuatara transferred onto Cuvier.....

.....

Last month Department of Conservation transferred tuatara back onto Cuvier Island, just South East of Great Barrier. These were the off-spring of tuatara removed from the island in 1990. They have now travelled quite a distance as the eggs were flown to Wellington for incubation and only returned to Auckland as hatchlings (about finger length). And now, at three-years old they are 'home' again.

and then the birds are to be transported to Windy Hill and Glenfern Sanctuary. The birds will be held overnight and released on the morning of the 14th March giving them a full day to orient themselves. The field team at Windy Hill will monitor for the birds over the coming month, feeding them to encourage the birds to stay in the managed area. Further checks will be made in August as the robins form breeding pairs and establish territories.

This translocation has been generously sponsored by the Biodiversity Condition Fund, the ARC Environmental Initiatives Fund, Great Barrier Airlines, and GBI Rent a Cars.

Annual Report

Ten Years of Pest Management — A Personal Perspective

BY JUDE GILBERT

It is a decade since the Little Windy Hill Company approved a modest pest management programme at its AGM in October of 1998. Since that time the south eastern Great Barrier Island project has grown to 750 hectares involving 14 landholdings. Over the years of newsletters we have shared much about the positive conservation outcomes of the project and in marking this decade of restoration I would like this report to be a more personal account.

Conservation is about people – it is an enlivening social activity that engages people in actively protecting and enjoying the natural environment. Unfortunately, it has as its downside, the of killing perfectly healthy animals and plants because we have deemed them damaging to the native order we value more highly. It is based on human judgment.

The decade has been for me as Project manager and vision holder, a steep and ongoing learning curve full of surprises, delight (those first Barrier born robins after 140 years was something else), failures, angst about getting it right, heaps of support, and darn right doggedness. Keeping such a successful mammal as the rat down takes ruthlessness.

Getting an inkling of an understanding about the dynamics at play in this regenerating forest has

been inspiring – living in it you learn much by osmosis but a great deal more from the science of it. I have loved the learning.

Top of my list is ...

Appreciation.

- How amazing it is to live in a place like this and, with the permission from landowners, to be able to pursue my passion of giving the native species here the fullest opportunity I can to flourish and be uplifting to all.

- I thank my husband, Scott, who allows me the freedom combined with a solid financial backing, to do this.

- This year we have a flock of 14 kaka, and have for the first time, seen juvenile lizards in the lizard 'motel's'.

- To the field team here—Kevin as field manager and the field workers Dean, Rachel and Dave – thank you, you are outstanding. These hardworking people are the engine room of the pest management and monitoring programme – they are committed, conscientious, and as interested in the results of their efforts as anyone. The sheer size and complexity of the project and the biodiversity gains made are a tribute to them.

- I am also hugely appreciative of the advice, support, and encouragement I get from fellow Trustees, friends, locals, conservation professionals, and local government personnel.

- The restoration work here

could not be undertaken without the generous support from a number of funding bodies, landowners, and individuals who are detailed and thanked at the end of this newsletter.

Successes...

- To have so many landowners, both private and public, working as cooperatively as we do towards a common goal I regard as an achievement.

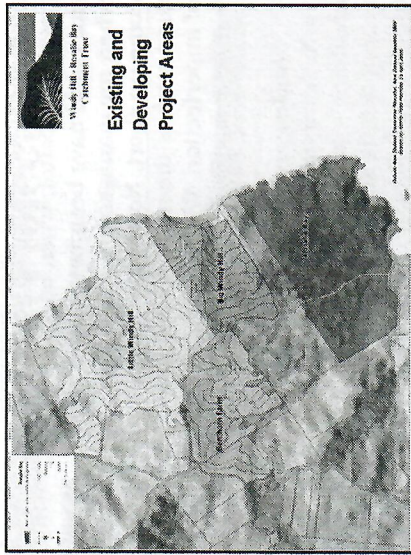
- The translocation of North Island robins to Windy Hill marked the turning of the tide for waning biodiversity on the Island and a thumbs up from DoC as to the efficacy of our programme. I look forward to more birds in March 2009.

- To have developed a committed field team of such a high standard, formed from people who have had long histories of unemployment is a bonus. The project has provided an opportunity for these people to shine and to be recognised for their skill.

- The work of the project is highly regarded. We are well known throughout NZ and have been recognised through Awards, the participation of Universities, and the involvement of DoC, the ARC, and Landcare Research.

- To have sustained funding over this period of time is also a mark of the value of our work.

- We have developed a comprehensive monitoring programme with a Control and have a critical approach to research with a robust scientific base. The results are widely shared.



- We have promoted the development of the sanctuary area throughout NZ through newsletters, workshops, and conferences.
- I have proven that biodiversity on private land can be sustained and enhanced over time by community.

... and failures

We have failed in our original objective of managing pests to low densities in the absence of toxins. After 5 years of trapping our monitoring showed we could not get rat numbers down sufficiently with this method alone. A very cautious introduction of toxins on a twice yearly 'pulsed' basis reduced rat densities markedly over 4 years but still produced inconsistent results. For example, rat tracking tunnel percentages at Little Windy Hill doubled this year in spite of intensive management.

With conditional approval from landowners, the project has converted to a toxin base and trapping has ceased. This has, for me, meant change from a long-held philosophical organic view, and a new range of challenges. There have been times when

more timely consultation would have been better, when our practice could have been better, and when my management skills have come up short. No excuses, other than such is the human condition of imperfection. We are learning from our mistakes.

Challenges...

Not everybody likes what you are doing – while I am open to robust debate about our practice and discussion about the ethics of this, I am occasionally distressed at the levels of intimidation I experience – angry and vexatious people who use threats, bullying, and even vandalism of the trapping gear as a way of expressing their opinions.

It is no easy matter accommodating the spectrum of value and belief systems from the 43 individuals who own the properties in the sanctuary area, let alone those of the neighbours to the project. And we do make errors, boundaries being a key one, but where these are pointed out I am conscientious about righting wrongs in as timely a manner as possible.

Trying to get the risk/benefit balance right is a challenge for any activity like this.

Finding funding continues to remain a challenge as is meeting the sometimes exhaustive conditions set by some funders.

The way ahead...

The goal now is to reduce the costs of the project as we head into lean financial times (some funding bodies have ceased giving grants) and improve the efficacy of our pest management, ie: to reduce rats, feral cats, weeds, and pigs

even further. These first few months of the toxin-based programme we will be used to establish the minimum amount of toxin required for the best results.

The Trust has put in place a retrenchment plan which will unfold over the next 18 months dependent on funding and the determination of the resource required to manage the new toxin based programme.

I have managed the Trust funds fairly prudently and am confident that we are well placed to weather the current economic downturn in the short term and can complete the expansion our restoration sanctuary area to Rosalie Bay.

Thank you to the following Trust

Sponsors:
Biodiversity Condition Fund
Kelvin Floyd
ARC Environmental Initiatives Fund
Auckland City Council Heritage Fund
Sealink Ltd
Lotteries Environment & Heritage Fund
Great Barrier Airlines

And to the Great Barrier
Landowners: Little Windy Hill Co Ltd, Helga and Peter Speck (Benthorn Farm), Bruce and Cynthia Macnee, Nick Wilkinson, Somerville & Nicolson Families, Blaklock Family, Robin Henderson, Martina and Pedro Tschirky, Wells Family, Rachel Wakefield, Harland Family, DoC, Rosalie Bay Farms.

After ten years I remain enthusiastic about the sanctuary and committed to continuing to manage it to the very best of my ability.

Kaitoke Beach Restoration Project – Volunteer Planting

BY PATRICK THORP



Photo by Patrick Thorp

The Kaitoke Beach Restoration project is into its second year of funding from Auckland City and work is gearing up for the first major planting programme in late May / June 2009 (Queens Birthday weekend) when 11,500 eco sourced native sand binding plants will be planted in front of the Claris airfield as part of the project to protect the airfield and arrest the degradation of the dune system.

While the Transport Section of Auckland City has been the major funder of the project, financial support from the Great Barrier Community Board and support from the land owner, the Department of Conservation and the local iwi have ensured all major groups are supporting the outcomes of this project.

The project combines the requirement of Auckland City to manage and protect the airfield asset and at the same time enhance the ecological environment of the Kaitoke Dune system.

The 11,500 plants will consist of 9,000 spinifex, 2,000 pingao and 500 sand tussock plants.

To achieve the goal of planting these massive numbers of plants public planting days are being organized around the Queens Birthday weekend and we need as many hard

Kaitoke dunes: in serious need of stabilization.

working volunteers as possible. The digging is easy, the environment fantastic and the more company we can get the better the days will be.

The project managers are going to hold an information evening closer to the planting days for those who wish to learn more about the project.

A date for this meeting will be set soon and information distributed on the Island

A school planting day is being organized for Friday May 29 and a public planting day is organized for Sunday the 31st of May.

Support from the Great Barrier Community Board will include a BBQ and drinks for those who attend.

To find out more, please contact Board Member Izzy Fordham. Izzy's contact details are as below

Home 4290 145 – Wk 4290 260 or e-mail at izzy@farmside.co.nz

Countdown to Eradication


BY TONY BOUZAID

Planning is well advanced for the eradication of pests from Kotuku Peninsula. The first stage has been preparing the ground for the aerial bait drops as was carried out on Kaikoura Island in August last year.

The first pest to be eliminated was the pig which was carried out by John Bacon after the fence was finished and the vehicular gates closed. It took several visits before we could finally say the last one was dealt with.

The remaining pests we have left to eliminate are rats, mice, rabbits and cats. In order to trace any rats or mice that survive the bait drop we have installed a 50m x 50m grid of tracking tunnels across the entire peninsula. This involved establishing GPS coordinates for all the existing bait lines then planning new lines where there was more than a 50m separation. Envirokiwi were employed to cut and mark lines through the bush, then measured out at 50m intervals along the lines where tracking tunnels were pegged to the ground and identified with a code. Tracking tunnels will also be positioned in between all the 543 bait stations.

Another job is preparing the dwellings for the drops which where possible means rabbit proofing the buildings with wire mesh so that there is less places to hide or burrow. We will be hand spreading bait around and under the buildings with bait stations inside at selected locations as well.

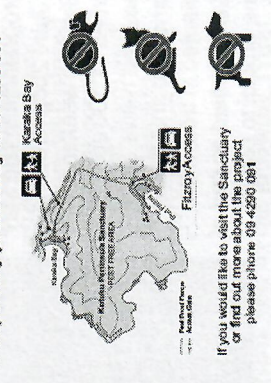


KOTUKU PENINSULA SANCTUARY

Native species on Great Barrier Island are under threat from cats, rabbits and pigs. Kotuku Peninsula is pest free, and is protected by a pest proof fence.

Please help to maintain the pest free area

- Check your belongings for rats and mice
- Keep pets outside the peninsula
- Leave traps and bait stations untouched
- Report any pest activity to 09 4290 091



Map labels: Karaka Bay, Karaka Bay Access, Fitzroy Access, Port of Call Bay, Port of Call Access, Kotuku Peninsula Sanctuary, Great Barrier Island.

If you would like to visit the Sanctuary or find out more about the project, please phone 09 4290 091

One of the most difficult jobs is spraying all the rank kikuyu to get it matted down before the drops as the bait will not penetrate to the bottom where mice and rats will often live. As there is a considerable amount of this outside the fenced paddocks it has to be sprayed twice for a thorough kill. It will then require some heavy rain to mat down.

After the second bait drop we will monitor the tracking tunnels in order to locate surviving rodents. We estimate it will require 10 people for 6 day stints, 3 days to put cards in all the tunnels and another 3 days to bring them all in. This will have to be done once a month for 6 months and if after that time no sign is found then every 3 months for 2 years. We are keen to hear from anyone who is keen to volunteer for this duty which will occur between September 2009 and March 2010

initially. Once we can satisfy the powers that be (viz the Department of Conservation) that we have successfully eradicated the rats and cats we will apply for the reintroduction of other endangered species that were once resident on the island.

Buffer zone controls are being set up around the fence ends, along the shorelines and around the dwellings to monitor rodent activity before the drops and after to check for any incursions. These consist of bait stations, rat traps and tracking tunnels. Signage will be installed around the peninsula beforehand to warn people about the bait drops and after to advise them of the pest free status of the peninsula and to check their boats for rodents before anchoring.

Over the last week I have become aware of three recent

Membership Fees

Ordinary Subscriber: \$25.00 Senior Subscriber: \$20.00
 Family Subscriber: \$35.00 Life Subscriber: \$250.00
 Life Senior subscriber \$200.00

Corporate subscriber negotiable (contact info@gbict.co.nz)

Name:

Address:

.....

Phone No. and/or Faximilie No.

Email:

Resident Ratepayer Resident & Ratepayer

Type of Membership: (Please circle relevant type)

Student / Ordinary / Senior / Family / Life (senior) / Life / Corporate

Please post to: Great Barrier Island Charitable Trust
 P.O. Box 105, Claris, Gt. Barrier Island



Tracking tunnel detail - Kotuku Penn.

occasions where boats anchored in Kiwiriki Bay and Kaiaraara Bay have been boarded by rats at night. This is a clear indication that the rat density in these areas is extremely high, particularly now when the trees are fruiting and there is plenty of food about.