

# Matiu Really Matters

October 2010



Haere mai ki Matiu

## ***News from Matiu, the Island***

The most important news happening this year that adds to the history of Matiu/Somes is on 17<sup>th</sup> November, 2010. In accordance with the Treaty of Waitangi settlement between the Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust and the Government of New Zealand, the future governance of Matiu/Somes is to be shared.

Thus **Te Hokitanga Mai ā Matiu** will be celebrated by the Harbour Islands Kaitiaki Board, with representatives of the Port Nicholson Block, Department of Conservation, and guests.

This special occasion in the history of Matiu will begin with a Powhiri and whakatau, followed by speeches from Sir Ngatata Love and Hon. Kate Wilkinson, Minister of Conservation. Then a plaque commemorating the occasion will be unveiled.

A guided walk and cultural tour of the island will be available in the afternoon.

Another interesting step in Matiu's history will be the step to becoming a showcase for sustainable energy, with tenders being let recently for the supply and installation of a **renewable energy system** on the island.

The project, which will see diesel generation replaced with a system harnessing energy from wind, water and the sun, is a partnership between DOC, the Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust, the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA) and Industrial Research Limited (IRL). It is being led by the Harbour Islands Kaitiaki (governance) Board.

More about this exciting project will be in the next issue of Matiu Really Matters.

**Rob Stone**, Poneke Area Manager

### **Welcome to this newsletter**

*This Newsletter is produced by the Matiu/Somes Island Charitable Trust, a non-profit organisation with one of its purposes being to promote the Island.*

*Matiu/Somes Island Charitable Trust members are Mark Te One, Liz Mellish, Fred Allen, Colin Ryder, Ray Smith, Erini Shepherd, Jan Heine.*

### **What's in this issue?**

*Penguins have been pondering, and represented at conferences*

*Eastbourne Rangers busy over winter, & are primed for summer duties*

*GST means new EbyW fares*

*Matiu/Somes enters the international stage in NSW*

*Whare Mahana people are busy*

*Corinne & colleagues track the giant weta*

*F&B are doing things, & so are the Karobusters*

*Fluttering shearwater project revitalised*

## **The Rangers' Ramble – time to get ready for summer**

*Kia Ora all and Haere Mai*

*Well, if this is our spring edition, we are wondering when the warmer weather will begin to visit us! Even so, visitor numbers have started to climb again, and the flora and fauna seems to have detected a change in the seasons that feels not so present to the rest of us.*

*It was a great winter on the island with many wonderful people having shared this special place. One of things that made winter such a treat, was the amount of rain we had, in fact, we have never seen the island so drenched.*

*This rain has given a positive start to the 2,000 new plants that volunteers and staff got in the ground. Many of these plants were species that had not been planted here in the past and will give the forest floor new ferns, sedges, grasses, shrubs and lots of little metal hoops with fluorescent tape.*

*Winter for us is always a good time to really muck in and get jobs done that are hard to achieve during busy summer months. We managed to get a new no landing sign erected on the eastern shore to help stop illegal landings, new mesh on track culverts, a fancy new entrance to the Quarantine and a good old island tidy up.*

*One large job ticking away in the background is our sustainable energy project, which due to its complexity we now hope to have up and running by autumn. This system will include cutting edge technology in the form of a trial hydrogen energy storage system.*

*As I write this, Jo and Iain will be landing at Wellington Airport into a cool stiff Southerly after their six-month Greek yachting adventure. They were begging a few months ago for some cooler weather and chance to light the fire, so I guess we have then to blame for the current climate!*

*During their leave we originally had Richard Brown and family helping Matt look after the island. When Richard took a full time role with DOC in Takaka, we brought in an old island friend – Di Batchelor – to share the management role and offer all island friends so much with her friendly and natural style.*

*Island nature continuously amazes us with Kakariki fly bys, penguin antics, tuatara chill outs, and the resilience of trees in the face of gale force winds. We also had a very rare visitor to this paradise – and this one really takes the odd ball award! – Di spotted a southern elephant seal on the lighthouse beach in September.*

*We look forward to seeing you all again soon, while we tackle our next season's work load, of which an upgrade for the visitors centre is a main focus, along with installing insulation in all visitor buildings.*

*One major highlight happening here soon is Te Hokitanga Mai a Matiu – the island treaty settlement ceremony, a special day for this place and all involved with it.*

*Until next time, thanks for all your kind help. Keep smiling at the island, and we will keep it smiling back.*

*Kia Ora,*

**Richard, Di and Matt**

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*Update on the weather from the Editor who has dithered so long on this issue: summer has now arrived and with a vengeance in that everything is drying up fast!*

### **EMAIL ADDRESSES PLEASE!**

**To save paper, reduce printing and postage costs, and minimise handling, we would like send this newsletter by e-mail to as many Friends as possible. Please help by sending your email address to**  
***rmsmith@xtra.co.nz***

**Your help will be much appreciated**

**Thank you**

**DO YOUR BIT TO REDUCE WASTE**

## **From Di Batchelor on Matiu/Somes – again**

*It's been a breath of lovely sea air doing a three-month stint as a temporary ranger here. I've enjoyed hosting day and overnight visitors and getting to know the members of the wider Matiu Somes community e.g. ferry staff, penguin team, DOC staff, karo busters etc. The things that impress me most is the near-eradication of boxthorn which I first attacked here with Tony Henry in 2000, the growth of the forest over the last five years is noticeable, and I like the emphasis on public conservation awareness by DOC staff and EFR volunteers. It's also been a great opportunity for me to develop handy DOC ranger skills.*

Kia pai to ra

Di Batchelor - Island Ranger

## **Hi everyone from Jo on email**

*Sorry for not getting back to you sooner. You sent the email on the day we left Greece and we have now entered family madness and time to check emails seems to be non-existent.*

*I am assuming that you have already finished the newsletter but if not (and it isn't Ed.) here's a little bit.*

*Our time in Greece ended on a high note as the temperatures dropped to a level below a constant sweat. Iain and I are now visiting family in the UK where Autumn is setting in with a beautiful show of colour. We are more than ready to get back to the island (Matiu, not the Greek ones), catch up with friends, hear your news, and head into a third summer! So see ya soon (22<sup>nd</sup> October).*

**Jo & Iain**

**Jo did not have to wear DOC uniform on the Aegean Sea**



**Marathi, one of the Greek islands Jo and Iain visited, & where goats reign supreme!**



## **East by West Commuter Newsletter**

*With the days getting longer we bring some positive updates, to counter the less than palatable GST increases we're all about to face.*

*East By West is proud to introduce to you all our "New and Improved" website with all our regular timetable and fare information. We also have a page specifically for you to leave comments and chat to us as well as other ferry goers.*

*Now the news you haven't been waiting for our new fares effective from Friday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2010, which follow:  
Happy sailing, **Jeremy Ward**,  
Manager, East by West Ferries*



### **NEW FARES for Matiu trips: effective 1<sup>st</sup> October 2010**

|                                      |                |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Matiu Island One way Return</b>   |                |
| <b>Adult</b>                         | <b>\$22.00</b> |
| <b>Student</b> (with valid ID)       | <b>\$18.00</b> |
| <b>Child</b> (3-15 years)            | <b>\$11.50</b> |
| <b>Family</b> (2 Adults, 4 Children) | <b>\$64.00</b> |

*All above fares have been set in conjunction with Greater Wellington Regional Council and reflect the GST rise and some rounding. The good news is our concession fare increases have been kept to the bare minimum.*

## **Penguin Ponderings – 28-29<sup>th</sup> September 2010**

The teams were:

- 28 September: Reg Cotter, Graeme Taylor, Ros Batcheler, Vince Waanders, Mike Rumble, and Brent Tandy.
- 29 September: Reg Cotter, Graeme Taylor, Ros Batcheler, Vince Waanders, Mike Rumble, and Brent Tandy.
- Alison Ballance (RNZ) joined the team from the afternoon of 28 September until the morning of 29 September.

The weather was fine for 28<sup>th</sup> September and during most of the day on the 29<sup>th</sup>, but very windy and extremely wet during the evening work at the Whare. The team worked in two groups for most of the survey, as a result all sites located were checked in two days. Set aside 30<sup>th</sup> September for nest searches and track clearing but the weather prevented this from happening. In a change from previous surveys, many of the birds on nests with eggs or chicks were removed, weighed, and/or checked for bands/transponders. Web tags were also added to some birds that had been fitted with only a transponder (right web) or no band and no transponder (left web).

We visited 279 sites (this count is high because some sites were checked more than once)

We captured or sighted 193 birds in nests or arriving from the harbour (some of these were sighted more than once)

We found 130 sites with birds, chicks, or eggs in them

We found and marked 8 new nest sites with birds nesting in them (one was set up with a relocated box)

We captured 18 birds on the first night (3 at the Loop, the rest in the Wharf Area and East Coast)

We captured 22 birds on the second night (7 at the Loop, the rest in the Wharf Area and East Coast, or on the sealed road)

Graeme Taylor added a transponder to one penguin, and 35 web tags to other birds



**Brent Tandy & Ros Batcheler recording finds.  
Mike Rumble measuring up.**



### **The total counts**

that we confirmed:

61 banded penguins

19 transponded penguins

12 penguins fitted both a band and a transponder

6 penguins fitted with web tags

126 single penguins and 14 pairs in the nests

The number of birds NOT Banded or Transponded was not counted as not all the birds in nests either could not be reached or were left undisturbed in their nest.

### **Points of note:**

- Alison Ballance came to the island to record a penguin survey for National Radio's Our Changing World programme which was broadcast on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> October. Alison also helped with bird captures.

- 10 chicks were found in nests. One of the teams made a disputed claim for first find at 12.50pm on 28 September.



**Photos by Reg Cotter**

Thanks to Reg Cotter (our Team Leader), Brent Tandy (DOC), Vince Waanders (DOC), Ros Batcheler (OSNZ), Mike Rumble (EFR) for their individual and collective contributions to the survey.

Thanks also to Di Batchelor (DOC Ranger, Matiu/Somes) who supported our work during the three days we were on Matiu/Somes Island.





## **Ticks on LBPs**

*Brent Tandy found ticks on Little Blue Penguins during one of the searches and sent them to Allen Heath, of AgResearch, who said they were a male and female of Ixodes eudyptidis Maskell, 1885. This tick is relatively common among the seabirds on Matiu, and around New Zealand. You can google the species name to find some useful references, and if more ticks are found, on Matiu or elsewhere, Allen would like them as there is still a lot to be known about the NZ tick fauna.*

*New Zealand shares Ixodes eudyptidis with Australia (as we do with the penguin) which would explain its distribution on the south-east coast of Australia and most of New Zealand. We do not really know whether the tick is endemic to New Zealand and then was 'exported' to Australia or vice versa, but given its widespread distribution in NZ and its somewhat restricted distribution in Australia, Allen reckons it's one of our successful exports.*

## **MAKARO ISLAND, 5<sup>th</sup> October 2010**

We had a perfect Wellington day, calm and sunny, for this trip to Makaro Island, leaving Evans Bay in the DOC boat, "Matahorua" skippered by Hawea Tomoana. He dropped some of us on the Island, then went to Matiu/Somes to collect two more people.

We completed a bird count enroute, and on Makaro.

We checked all known Little Blue Penguin nesting sites, and searched for new sites.

On the south end of the Island, high up at the top of the cliff, Graeme found a few white feathers, which he suspects belong to a White-faced Storm Petrel, signs of which have been seen here in the past.

The mallow had grown in huge clumps, as well as scattered among the Taupata, all over the island. We removed as much as could be reached, before it went to seed, and other weeds as found.

We collected any rubbish found, and filled about ¾ of a rubbish bag, mainly plastic items.

The rat bait stations were checked and baits changed.

With such a great group of hard working people a lot was accomplished.

## **MAKARO Island counts**

### **BIRDS SEEN AT SEA:**

|                       |     |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Blackbacked Gull      | 6   |
| Fluttering Shearwater | 113 |
| Gannet                | 1   |
| Little Blue Penguin   | 13  |
| Redbilled Gull        | 5   |
| Shag, Black           | 2   |
| Shag, Little          | 1   |

### **BIRDS SEEN ON ISLAND:**

|                    |      |
|--------------------|------|
| Blackbird          | 1    |
| Blackbacked Gull   | 135  |
| Canada Goose       | 2    |
| Dunnock            | 2+1H |
| Redbilled Gull     | 5    |
| Shag, Little       | 1    |
| Shag, Spotted      | 3    |
| White-fronted Tern | 31   |

## **PENGUINS**

Checked 19 labelled and 6 unlabelled sites.

Found 4 new sites with penguins present; 3 are now labelled.

Found 7 penguins and 6 chicks, and 2 eggs in the sites checked.

**THE TEAM:** Hawea Homoana, (Skipper), Graeme Taylor (DOC), Di Batchelor (DOC), Ali Hull (DOC Mt Bruce), Reg Cotter (OSNZ), Mike Rumble (EFR), Angie Buettner (VUW), Ros Batchelor (OSNZ)

With thanks to DOC for transport.



**Reg represents Matiu's LBPs at the Penguin Conference**

## How winter went with the Eastbourne Forest Rangers

The Eastbourne Forest Rangers gathered on Matiu on 4<sup>th</sup> July to hear a most interesting and entertaining talk on skinks, geckos and tuatara by Richard Romijn, an expert in this field. Apart from the great talk it was good to get together because generally we work in ones or twos and may not see some members of the team for months at a time.

Our second winter providing volunteer rangers at weekends has gone by. Many weekends there were very few visitors because of poor weather but our being there released the DOC Rangers from meeting the ferries so that they could get on with other important work. So it has been worthwhile. Our 'Summer' season starts on 1<sup>st</sup> October and if past trends are anything to go by it should be a busy season.

There have been quite a number of guided tours, despite the weather. One of particular interest to me was a group of history students from Palmerston North. They had been studying, in the classroom, immigration to New Zealand in the 1870s. Their studies came alive for them when they actually stood on the ground where immigrants were quarantined, heard stories of conditions on the ships, and the tragedies behind the list of names on the memorial. This was a very worthwhile visit.

We have lost a couple of members, Elena and Stephen, because of other commitments, but have been fortunate to recruit two more very able people. It's quite a delicate task keeping numbers about the same. I can't recruit too many new people because some of the team get grumpy if they don't get enough work!

After a busy day on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> October, the Rangers (photos right column) are now primed for our duties over summer 2010-11. We had plenty of practice pronouncing the welcoming Mihi correctly (below). Hopefully we will not lose confidence when confronted by a boat load of visitors.

A new display in the foyer of the Quarantine Station (photo p.6) is impressive and will help visitors feel more aware of the fate of all those animals that passed through that building.

**Ray Smith**



**Back to school – learning with Jo, one of the teachers**



**Eastbourne Forest Rangers having their first lesson or two.**



**Matt (DOC) & Ray (our busy busy EFR organiser)**



**Eric McCartney, Rod Sutherland, Jerry Wellington – all ears**



**Anrik, Stan Hunt (initiator of the Matiu Ranging set-up), Reg Cotter (who practically lives on Matiu with the LBPs)**

## 2010 – a busy time for things historic

Recently (May 2010) I attended the ICOMOS Australia conference in Broken Hill, New South Wales, Australia, where I gave a presentation about the Maximum Security Animal Quarantine Station on Matiu/Somes Island.

ICOMOS is the international organisation responsible for promoting best historic heritage management practice, and most countries have a committee of their own. In New Zealand we also have an ICOMOS Charter that heritage practitioners follow.

Broken Hill is a mining town in the NSW outback, and the themes of the conference mirrored the landscape, with people speaking about historic towns, industrial heritage and remote pastoralism.

My presentation was the animal quarantine station on Matiu/Somes Island as a site of 'remote pastoralism', in which I gave a bit of history about animal quarantine on the island. I discussed how the great success of the island's ecological restoration is such that the Department of Conservation is now challenged with the role of communicating the importance of the animal quarantine station. I highlighted the Department's efforts interpreting the island's significant animal quarantine past, and the future management of the remaining buildings alongside the natural heritage of Matiu/Somes Island.

My talk was received very positively by the Aussies, who were intrigued by the topic, especially as other 'remote pastoralism' papers had discussed sheep stations in the middle of the outback. I even met a lady who had worked at Grosse Ile, Canada, an island with a similar human and animal quarantine past to Matiu/Somes Island. So it was a very good conference to attend, and a great way to promote the successes of Matiu/Somes Island on an international stage.

**Back in the Quarantine Station on Matiu,  
is a new display in the foyer**



Paulette in the "Priscilla Queen of the Desert" room at the Palace Hotel, Broken Hill, with conference delegates.

**Photo: Kevin Jones**

<http://www.doc.govt.nz/conservation/historic/by-region/wellington/poneke-area/matiu-somes-island/> to see the updated historic information on DOC's website, on the European history of Matiu/Somes Island.

No reira, noho ora mai ra

**Paulette**





## **Whare Mahana news**

### **A Matiu Somes Island Korowai**

*Sparked by an idea of how to use the resource of some of our manu (birds) who die on the island, I enrolled and have almost completed a superb Korowai course in Levin, and am starting on the island korowai sampler. I envisage that this will be a cloak made primarily of kakariki feathers, although working with Brent at DOC's conservancy office it will likely extend to include a variety of other island birds. The sample korowai will use all feathers from island birds so I can see how each type works for size/colour etc. When I finish this it'll be framed and hung in the Whare Mahana. The large adult size korowai will take some years to complete and will be gifted to Matiu Somes Island on completion.*

### **Books and Book Club**

*Generous donations of brand new books on a wide range of subjects are adding to an expanding and excellent resource in the house. The core group of Whare volunteers have initiated a book club with Huia Publishers and will discuss each book on each open weekend and deposit a copy of each book to the whare library.*

### **Trees**

*This Spring and Summer one task is to lower the tree line by the Whare facing the harbour, to let light in to dry the bogged lawn. Ranger Matt, volunteers Ian Brown and Owen Calder will do this work.*

### **Shoe bench/tidy**

*Recently volunteer Ian Brown recycled an old wooden seat into a shoe bench/shoe tidy rack for the laundry, to keep the entrance foyer of the whare tidy and hazard-free, and for people to sit while taking their shoes on and off. Many thanks to Ian.*

### **Very Special thanks to Kaye Mcleod**

*Special thanks to my mum, Kaye Mcleod, who spent a week on the island giving the Whare Mahana an **extreme clean**, patched the couch, hung curtains and gave various koha, a fantastic battery-powered lantern, a battery-powered egg beater, a portable battery-powered radio, new grip mat and bath mat for the bathroom and quality cleaning products.*

### **Tangaroa Garden Bed**

*Now gravelled and covered with treasures collected by manuhiri and with Rosie and Louis Brown's collection of beach glass. Now the former unattractive dirt bed is a cool oceanic/mosaic garden.*

### **The New Books**

*Meegan Hall and partner Peter Adds (Te Atiawa), Head of Maori Studies at Victoria University, who is a contributor to a beautifully produced book, **Contested Ground, Te Whenua I Tohea – The Taranaki Wars 1860 – 1881** which has been signed by every contributing author. A book about the **Polynesian Panthers**, koha from Dr Alice Te Punga Somerville and a book about **Paddy** the wandering Wellington Wharf dog has been koha from Terese Mcleod whose grandfather worked the wharfs and knew this famous Wellington dog.*

*Special thanks to Ranger Richard and his family who donated a Maori Language Dictionary and a children's book in Te Reo as a farewell present.*

### **Open Weekends**

*While we publicise this through a range of ways, just a reminder again that the Whare Mahana has an open weekend during the last weekend of every month and everyone is invited to participate as they feel comfortable, from popping in for a casual cuppa to staying the whole weekend. We mix weekends up according to who comes into maintenance/cleaning and whakawhanaungatanga*

*Contact me: **Terese Mcleod 027 75 33219 or 970 8400** for more details.*

*Nga mihi*

*Te whanau o Whare Mahana ki Matiu Somes Island*



## **Are footprint-tracking tunnels suitable for monitoring giant weta?**

**Extract of paper by Corinne Watts<sup>1</sup>, Ian Stringer<sup>2</sup>, Danny Thornburrow<sup>1</sup>, and Darryl McKenzie<sup>3</sup>**

To assess the effectiveness of management for all threatened insect taxa, appropriate monitoring tools are essential. In New Zealand the large-bodied flightless weta (genus *Deinacrida*) have mostly been monitored by searching through habitat during the day or spotlighting at night but this is time-consuming and the results depend on the skill of the searcher. Corinne and colleagues studied the effectiveness of footprint-tracking tunnels, similar to those used for monitoring small mammals in New Zealand, for monitoring the ground-dwelling Cook Strait giant weta (CSGW), *Deinacrida rugosa*, on Matiu-Somes Island.

First they examined the footprints of all weta species on Matiu-Somes Island to determine if those of CSGW could be clearly distinguished from the other species.

They found that Cook Strait giant weta (with transmitters) on Matiu moved each night, and that the average distance between daytime refuges for adult males was 8m, while adult females were about 21m apart.

Both the low recapture rates of marked adult CSGW and the nightly displacements of those with transmitters suggest that adult CSGW show no site fidelity and are clearly capable of moving large distances each night.

This also determined that tracking tunnels should be spaced about 30m to reduce to probability of an individual CSGW tracking multiple tunnels.

However their responses may be affected by meteorological conditions, an aspect which needs to be investigated.

On *Mana Island* adult females with transmitters stay within a small area (perhaps a metre radius) over several days and then migrate (about 20m, maximum 56m) overnight to a new site and repeat the pattern. This behaviour maybe associated with mating followed by oviposition.

On *Maud Island* mean displacement was male 19m, female 7m, and at Karori Sanctuary male 18m, female 8m.

On *Matiu-Somes* however adult males may need to move only shorter distances because they find females quickly as there are lots of them, but the females may have to move further, than on Maud Island or at Karori Sanctuary, to find suitable oviposition sites.

### **Our results show that:**

- Footprint tracking tunnels detect adult CSGW at more sites where they are present than by visual searching for them at night.
- Baiting with peanut butter increases the tunnels' effectiveness for detecting adult CSGW.
- Using either baited or non-baited tracking tunnels can be used to indicate the number of weta present near tunnels.
- Use of tracking tunnels is more efficient because they can be left over several nights whereas searches have to be repeated if few weta are active.
- Tracking tunnels could be used with some other insects, provided their footprints are diagnostic.
- Tracking tunnels are non-lethal and therefore particularly suitable for monitoring other large threatened insects.



**A fine CSGW**

### **With an equally fine Danny Thornburrow**



<sup>1</sup> Landcare Research, <sup>2</sup> DOC, <sup>3</sup>Proteus Wildlife Research Consultants

## Forest & Bird doings

The planting programme for another year is over. This year most work has been secondary planting under the forest and shrub canopy. DOC staff have selected the plants, directed the planting, and will monitor the sites to assess results and enable methods for further plantings to be refined.

F&B volunteers have assisted with planting on a significant number of these plots scattered around the island. Several Monday and Sunday scheduled work parties had to be cancelled due to the weather. Five planting days went ahead and 10 to 12 volunteers were all that were required to complete the work each day.

The demand for volunteers has reduced over the years. This year, 2010, Sunday planting volunteer/days totalled 30. Ten years ago Sunday volunteer/days totalled 148.

Monday volunteer work/days in the nursery and site preparation this year totalled 90, but ten years ago Monday volunteer/days totalled 408.

There has been limited work in the nursery as DOC have been purchasing seedlings for planting out on these plots and there has been reduced numbers to bag on. Monday work parties will not be required every fortnight.

In 2011 a number of Sunday planting/work parties to assist DOC staff will be scheduled June–September.

Members who travel to Matiu/Somes enjoy the work and interest in the programme remains high. However most mid-week volunteers and long-time Sunday volunteers are now less active than some years ago, and the nature of the work has changed considerably. In the year ahead, the ranks of 'Dad and Mums Army' will need replenishing. If interested in F&B work on Matiu/Somes and you would like a day with us on the Island, for details of planned trips please give

**Alex Kettles** a call on **5696208**

## Karobusters

*This volunteer group removes karo and other undesirable species on Matiu, and does a range of tasks to assist DOC. It visits the Island about three times a year.*

New volunteers are sought as changes in members' lives mean some can no longer attend. So a few spaces in the group have opened up. If you are interested or would like to find out more,

**contact Dave Cox:** [coxfamily@paradise.net.nz](mailto:coxfamily@paradise.net.nz)

**Next work parties are:**

**4-5 December 2010**

**5-6 February 2011**

**5-6 March**

**9-10 April**

At this stage the December trip is full, but still some room available on each of the 2011 trips

## Bonfire Bust turns into Harbour Island Rescue

*Maritime police out to catch troublemakers who lit a bonfire on a protected island in Wellington Harbour ended up rescuing cold and stranded international students.*

*Three men and two women, in their late 20s, had been sailing and fishing in the harbour when the wind died completely about 6pm on a Saturday in April.*

*When starting the outboard on their 16-foot yacht, a wave from a passing ferry knocked the motor overboard. Without oars, they used a chillybin lid and bits of wood to paddle to Ward Id.*

*The island is a conservation reserve with a 24-hour fire ban and visitors are not allowed to camp overnight.*

*One member, from South America, said they tried to get the attention of at least 20 passing boats.*

*"We called our friends but we didn't want to cause any trouble for police or the Coastguard. We never felt like we were in a life-threatening situation. We didn't know it was a DOC reserve. When it got dark, we lit the fire to keep warm. It was cold and all we had were a few bananas and muesli bars."*

*Police were alerted after a passing fishing boat spotted a fire on the island about 9pm. After picking up two DOC rangers from nearby Matiu/ Somes Island, a police boat headed out to catch the culprits.*

*"We went out there with the intention to catch some baddies on the island camping and lighting fires but it turned into a rescue. The DOC rangers were looking to lay down the law, and possibly prosecute them, but they changed their tune, realising these guys had lit that fire for warmth."*

*The students, and the yacht, were taken back to Seatoun. They were apologetic, relieved to be rescued and unlikely to face any punishment.*

## Translocation of Fluttering Shearwater chicks

### The existing project

Seabirds have a very strong homing instinct to their natal burrow, so their chicks need to be translocated from the source population up to four weeks before fledging and are then hand-fed until they fledge. Sound systems coupled with chick transfers have attracted some adult birds to land and some have bred, when used on projects elsewhere.

Fluttering Shearwater. Fluttering Shearwaters have been successfully translocated onto Maud Island in the Marlborough Sounds (1991-1996) and onto Mana Island (2006-2008).

The project to attract Fluttering Shearwaters to Matiu/Somes Island was started in 2005, to establish a breeding colony on the island. Work completed so far for this project has included:

- Installation of a sound system, powered by solar panels, playing Fluttering Shearwater calls during the hours of darkness to attract birds to land,
- Installation of numerous artificial burrows for any birds that do land,
- Installation of take-off ramps to assist any birds that do land to leave the ground again.

Unfortunately the valley site which was chosen is close to the island's summit and beneath 10–12 foot high bush cover. It has proved unsuccessful in attracting any birds to land.

### Modifying existing project

A new site near the lighthouse has been identified as being more suitable for a Fluttering Shearwater colony. It is grass-covered sloping ground, near the cliff edge, open to the south and has many natural take-off points immediately adjacent.

The sound system has been moved to the new cliff-top location, and the speakers properly set-up.

Thirty-three new artificial burrows have been built off the island for installation at this new site. Eight of those were installed on 23<sup>rd</sup> September by Brent Tandy, Helen Gummer and Shane in a training session. More will be installed over the next month or two.

### Mana Island translocation project

This project used chicks sourced from Long Island in the Marlborough Sounds. In early January for 3 years, these chicks (247 over 3 years) were flown by helicopter (which reduces stress) to Mana Island. They were housed in artificial burrows, hand-fed daily and they fledged over the next 4-5 weeks.

### Proposed new phase for Matiu project

This proposal is identical to that on Mana, and is a 3-year project using chicks from the same location, Long Island, and the same techniques. It is not a new project for Matiu/Somes Island, but a revitalisation and reinvigoration of the already existing project, a new phase to establish a breeding colony of Fluttering Shearwaters on Matiu/Somes Island.

The proposal is to translocate around 50 chicks the first year, and up to 100 chicks transferred in each of the next two years, giving a total of approximately 250 chicks translocated over 3 years.

*The project is hoped to be full-on for summer 2011/2012.*

*To learn more about the Mana Island project, how their translocation project was carried out and the results they achieved, read the 2010 DOC report by Helen Gummer & Lynn Adams (Translocation techniques for fluttering shearwaters (*Puffinus gavia*): establishing a colony on Mana Island, New Zealand).*

**Shane Cotter**

### A speaker in its new position



### Putting in a burrow



### Are these Fluttering SW feathers?



### **Overnight stays for Friends**

We now have a variety of overnight accommodation available for Friends of Matiu. If interested check out the DOC website [www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz) for information and bookings.

Forest and Bird Members can get a 25% discount on any Island accommodation contact the DOC Wellington Visitors Centre [wellingtonvc@doc.govt.nz](mailto:wellingtonvc@doc.govt.nz)  
04 384 7770

**The next Karobusters trips are on**  
**4-5 December 2010 – full**  
**5-6 February 2011**  
**5-6 March**  
**9-10 April**

**Some room still available on 2011 trips**  
**So for further information please**  
**contact Dave Cox:**  
**[coxfamily@paradise.net.nz](mailto:coxfamily@paradise.net.nz)**

### **Guided Walks**

**Interested? check out the doc website**  
**[www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz) or email Matt and Jo at**  
**[matiusomes@doc.govt.nz](mailto:matiusomes@doc.govt.nz)**

### **Matiu Really Matters\* – Newsletter**

Issued c.3 times a year, and as required

\*Name based on that used in Wellington Botanical Society Newsletter, by kind permission of Stan Butcher, Lower Hutt Branch Forest & Bird, Wellington Botanical Society

Thank you to all contributors – without your input it would not be the interesting read it is. And thanks to the team on Matiu/Somes of Jo & Matt. **Jan Heine NL compiler**

To have your say, why not email [janheine@xtra.co.nz](mailto:janheine@xtra.co.nz)

**Next issue is next year 2011:**  
**Deadline due 01/02/11**



### **Would you like to help with projects on Matiu/Somes Island**

Please give us details of your name, email address, and phone number and we will send you notices and news of projects and events. If you do not have email but would like to contribute to conservation projects on the Island, please give your postal address and we will send you newsletters from time to time (about 3 times a year).

Then we can invite you to:

- take part in hands-on conservation projects
- work with like-minded people on Island projects
- receive newsletters
- stay overnight as part of a 'work' weekend

Name:.....  
 Email address: .....  
 Telephone: .....  
 Postal address: .....  
 .....  
 .....

### **Your donation will help the Trust initiate projects on the Island**

Donation .....

Please send to:  
**Matiu/Somes Island Charitable Trust**  
C/- PO Box 536  
Wellington

Do you want to help the Trust?

Why not fill in this form?

