



Hoiho

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Successful sub-Antarctic expedition

Five years ago the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust asked our Southern Islands Project Officer Sandy King to write a feasibility report on surveying penguin numbers on the sub-Antarctic Auckland Islands. We had not quite realised that to undertake such a survey by ourselves was horrendously expensive and as good things take time, it was put on hold until funds could be raised.

The timely production of the article "A Mainland Penguin Outpost" (Hoiho, November 2009), pointed out that some of the previously held assumptions about the penguin population can't be upheld and reiterated the need for population data from the sub-Antarctics.

Work of this nature was also on DOC's 'to do' list and late last year two of our task force had the opportunity to support and take part in a DOC-led expedition to carry out a yep distribution survey.

We start here with Sandy's account of the expedition...

While some people may consider Stewart Island far flung and remote, and baulk at the idea of working there, when compared to the Auckland Islands it is just out the back door. Some 460km south of Bluff, the Auckland Islands lie at latitude 50°S – putting them in the "furious fifties" of the southern ocean.

They are the largest of New Zealand's sub-Antarctic islands, visited occasionally by DOC staff and researchers, a few hardy yachtsmen and fishermen, and up to 600 tourists annually who travel in the relative comfort of larger well appointed vessels but spend no more than 2-3 days in the vicinity. There is over 500km of coastline, much of which is steep and inaccessible to penguins and people, particularly on the exposed western side. Uninhabited now, it used to be farmed by a hardy few who left behind cattle, sheep, goats pigs, cats and rabbits. Most have been eliminated but feral cats and pigs remain. Curiously, rats have never managed to colonise the islands, in spite of numerous shipwrecks.

Continued on page 2 >>





Expedition leader, Jo Hiscock

Trust Ranger Leith Thomson and I were chosen to represent the Trust; other participants were Jo Hiscock (DOC, expedition leader), Jo Ledington (DOC), Callum Lilley (DOC) and Kate Beer (University of Otago). The Trust also contributed to the cost of transport and accommodation, which were provided by Henk Haazen on his 15m yacht *Tiama*. Skipper Henk and crew Steve Parsons

completed the team of eight, the maximum number of people *Tiama* can carry.

The plan was to first get to the islands, about 40 hours sailing with a fair breeze, then use *Tiama* as a floating base while teams cruised close to the shoreline using inflatable dinghies with outboard motors, looking for indications that yep were using the area, then landing to confirm this. Approximately 650 litres of petrol were stowed aboard *Tiama* to accommodate the anticipated use of the motors. This technique has been used on Stewart Island successfully and means that long stretches of coast can be covered in a relatively short time. A second ploy was to take advantage of the fact that we would be anchored in a different place most nights and conduct dawn watches of the shoreline from onboard *Tiama*. We felt that the white breasts of birds entering the water would be reasonably obvious and we could identify sites being used by noting where the birds were coming from. At the same time we could conduct a crude count to give an idea of which sites had the most number of birds. Priority would be given to the east coast of the main island, which is rarely visited,

followed by Carnley Harbour and some small harbours on the south coast of Adams Island, Port Ross and some harbours in the north, and lastly, the small islands in the vicinity of Port Ross and the north eastern coast. Enderby Island was the lowest priority for us because of the fact that work has already been done there and we have a reasonable estimate of its yep population. Also, it is the most frequently visited site and is the place most likely to be easily surveyed in the future.

It was obvious from day 1 that the plan wasn't going to work. For a start, unfavourable weather delayed departure until later on day 2, and the voyage took 51 uncomfortable hours with gale force head winds – in Henk's words "a safe but uncomfortable trip". By the time we arrived we had just 21 days in which to complete our work, and by lunchtime on the first day we had realised that surveying from the dinghies would mostly be a waste of time. The well-worn tracks that are formed at sites where yeps enter and leave the forest were obscured by the activity of sea lions and feral pigs – not a problem that had been encountered on Stewart Island.



Accumulations of faeces which often mark points where birds stop to preen after a day at sea were washed clean by the frequent squalls. The signs were still there, but they were subtle compared to other areas and only visible at close range – we would have to walk most of the coast. This added another problem as even in the relatively sheltered harbours and inlets the wind was often sufficiently strong to create waves big enough to prevent landing by dinghy, and much of the coast was thickly fringed with kelp. The sealions presented yet another problem as sub-adult males vigorously defended “their” stretch of coast. Leith found them particularly challenging, and being an arborist in a former life even took to the trees to avoid them.

The dawn shoreline watches were not without issue either. Aside from needing to be ready to begin at 5.30am, we were usually anchored close in to the head of an inlet and most of the penguins were found further towards the entrance, often out of sight. At times when penguins were found forward of or opposite our anchorage watches were impeded by strong wind and sleety showers, which made binoculars almost a waste of time as we spent more time drying the lenses than looking through them.

In spite of all this we managed to survey almost 200km of coastline, and identified 301 landing sites.

Each day would begin with a shoreline count, the six surveyors taking turns in pairs to get up early and watch while others continued sleeping. Counts continued until 9am by which time everyone else was up and breakfasted. The anchor was up as soon as the watch finished and Henk would position

Tiama near the next section of coast to be surveyed. Steve would then drop off the survey team in pairs along the coast and return to *Tiama* to await a call for a pick up, or to be ferried around a particularly steep and impassible section. While waiting he and Henk would be attending to other chores – preparing lunch or dinner; cleaning and maintaining *Tiama*. Often the strong wind hampered dinghy operation and Henk would maneuver *Tiama* so that Steve and his passengers had the shortest possible downwind run in the dinghy. At times *Tiama* would be forced to anchor in an uncomfortable place while waiting for the shore parties to complete their task, with Henk and Steve adding “worry watch” to their onboard tasks.

This routine continued most days until early evening when the day's data would be entered onto a laptop and backed up, followed by dinner at around 8.30pm. Only 1.5 days were lost to weather; the team being forced to sit out wind gusts of over 70 knots which were accompanied by squalls of rain and sleet. Several mornings revealed a dusting of snow on the surrounding hills.

The effort paid off, and the survey was completed with time to contribute to other work programmes and have a quick look at some other sites of interest. Jo H and I spent two days on Adams Island banding a cohort of Gibson's wandering albatross chicks while the others visited the white-capped mollymawk colony at Southwest Cape to look for birds carrying data loggers.

The 301 landing sites identified are regarded as a minimum because some sections of coast that would be accessible to penguins



PHOTOS COURTESY OF JO HISCOCK

weren't surveyed due to sea conditions making them inaccessible to people at the time. Most landing sites identified would be used by one or more pairs, although it is probable that some would be used by non-breeders. The pig and cat free islands had more landing sites per kilometre of coast surveyed than the main island, which raises questions about the impact these animals are having on yep and other ground nesting birds. Areas of the main island adjacent to these islands, i.e. the northern shore of Carnley Harbour, and Port Ross and northern harbours, also had a higher number of landing sites than the coast in the middle of the main island, suggesting that perhaps the predator-free islands are acting as reservoirs whose overflow sustains the population.

This survey was just a prelude to a more comprehensive census, although when and how that will happen is as yet unknown. The certainty is that it will be costly and challenging, but we are now better informed about where yellow-eyed penguins are on the Auckland Islands and what areas to target, and the logistics of working there. And despite the rough weather both Leith and I will be putting up our hands to go back! ■



Callum Lilley from DOC Taranaki, shares his experience as part of the Auckland Islands trip



PHOTOS COURTESY OF CALLUM LILLEY

Sitting in front of my computer in mid-September 2009, I had been lamenting the short days and crappy weather that keeps a Marine Ranger out of the field and in the office. When an email message entitled "Subantarctic expedition opportunity" arrived, I was certainly in the mood for an expedition but thought "what are the chances?" However, I registered my interest, provided the required documentation and by the end of the month I was on the trip. I couldn't believe it – I was going to the Auckland Islands!

I reached Invercargill on November 4th and a portion of my excitement had morphed into anxiety. Expedition leader, Jo Hiscock, picked me up from the airport and dropped me off at the Tuatara Backpackers where I met up with Leith Thomson and Kate Beer. I wasn't the only one with a touch of nerves! Our primary concern was the rough seas of the Southern Ocean, but we were also leaping into the unknown. What would we be eating? Were there washing facilities? How many days could you justify wearing the same

pair of undies? Who are these other guys I'm going to be living in close quarters with for almost a month!?

Rough weather caused a day's delay and we set sail from Bluff to the Auckland Islands at 1600hrs on Saturday 7th November. The sea was moderate to rough later that evening and I was feeling fine. Unfortunately, my confidence was shattered very early on Sunday when I awoke to a very rough sea.

Not keen on risking solids, I had a cup of tea for breakfast and put on a brave face to give Leith (who had turned green) a ribbing and take a photo of him puking. A few hours after, I had to hand Leith my camera as I took my turn with the paper bag.

Late in the afternoon two days later, Skipper Henk Haazen bellowed a well received "land ho!" Soon after, fifty-one hours after leaving Bluff, we arrived. Very hungry, food was most welcome and 1st Mate Steve cooked an excellent pasta bake and strawberry shortcake. The other previously mentioned anxieties were also relieved when I found

we had a great crew and the diesel stove provided a means of rapidly drying washed or saturated clothes (and keeping warm) – it was time to really start enjoying the trip!

Our first morning at the Auckland Islands was fantastic! Sandy and Kate (staffing the first beach count shift) woke us soon after dawn to check out a southern right whale mother and calf. They were so close they were brushing against the dingy. After breakfast, we went ashore to trial our survey methods and it was a delight to set foot on firm ground. The place was spectacular! The megaherbs were cool and there were so many birds! Many, including tui, bellbirds and al shag seemed unafraid. During a short walk around the coast, we found penguin sign and spotted one climbing over the rocks. I had my first semi-terrifying encounter with an enormous sea lion. There were large limpets, massive spider crabs and the water was crystal clear. The only disappointment was the amount of pig sign and the damage they caused to both flora and fauna. Also, given the extreme wind and cool November temperatures, I have to admit I was happy to be there as a visitor rather than a permanent resident!

The next three weeks were hard yakka, but the experience of a lifetime. Every third morning work began at between 5 and 5.30am and the days were long. The twisted rata forest posed a barrier to easy foot travel, as did bluffs, wind, slippery rocks and numerous other obstacles, but it was a pleasure working in such wilderness. Adams and the other predator/browser-free islands



Mainland Update



were just covered in megaherbs and birdlife. We had the pleasure of visiting Enderby (albeit briefly) and a white-capped albatross colony where we took some fantastic photos. We saw historic sites, such as the wreck of the Grafton, old huts, a mummified cat in an old coastwatchers cave, finger posts, pieces of shipwrecks, cut stumps, no end of amazing wildlife and captured some amazing pictures.

It was wonderful to have such an opportunity and it really hit home what a privilege it was to be on the Aucklands when we visited one of the old Lands and Survey huts in Ranui Cove. It was built in 1963 and the original hut book was still there – only one third full! I really enjoyed the chance to develop my boating skills under the excellent tutelage of Henk and Steve, and they also taught me that every savoury left-over can be made into a delicious frittata. I learned a great deal about the flora, fauna and history of the Aucklands, as well as the primary subject of our trip... yellow-eyed penguins (a species of which my knowledge was rather sparse). I found that large sea lions generally stop at the end of a stick that is to be carried at all times in their presence, and that grown men sometimes squeal in fear when trying to internalise screams of terror; sorry Leith!

My experiences are too numerous to cram into this short article, but I will leave by saying it is a trip I will never forget!! ■

*A note from the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust:
"Thank you to DOC Southland for giving us this opportunity to explore the Auckland Islands".*

Last November the Mainland team of Debbie Barlow and I had the privilege of visiting the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust in Dunedin and see first hand how the Mainland sponsorship is utilised. The tour started at head office for a cup of tea, then the native plant nursery, followed by a visit to one of the reserves where we got to observe the hoiho, and the local pub to finish the day.

There were three key highlights for the team. Firstly, the opportunity to observe hoiho emerging from the ocean, shaking their tail feathers and waddling to their breeding nests. Interestingly, the two out-of-towners proved particularly adept at spotting hoiho in the wild and seemed to have a natural affinity with them, as these usually shy creatures tried to follow us back to town. Obviously, the penguins are regular purchasers of Mainland cheese and are fully aware \$1 from each packet goes to protecting their natural habitat.

The second highlight was being able to contrast the restoration at the reserve to the surrounding farmland. When given the opportunity and resources, New Zealand can regenerate itself incredible well. It was amazing to realise that only 12-odd years ago the cliff

face and beach head were grazing land.

Thirdly, the passion of the volunteers and staff of the Trust. At Mainland we know when you combine passion, resources and patience good things do happen. It is wonderful to see the passion of the people involved in the Trust, the resources we help make available, and patience of a 20 year partnership are all combining to make positive changes in the conservation arena.

We would like to thank all the people we meet at the Trust for giving us the opportunity to get out of the cheese shed and have a glimpse at the beauty of the Mainland. ■

Eugene Rush
Senior Brand Manager Mainland,
0800CHEESE (0800-243-373)



Good things take time



Debbie
Lala
Eugene

Auckland Islands with Leith...



Leith Thomson, Ranger for the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust was part of the team of six who voyaged to the Auckland Islands to undertake a distribution survey of yellow-eyed penguins in November/December 2009. On his return, Leith answered a variety of questions about his time in the 'furious fifties' from envious trustees and staff.

Q: Now you are back and it is all a distant memory what were the highlights for you?

The whole experience was simply amazing so picking out any single thing... well I guess the getting there, forging through those huge swells was very exhilarating though I was a bit sick. Seeing the whales, they came right up and turned to look up at us. I really felt I had met a whale. And seeing the noticeable differences between the predator-free Adams Island in the south and the rest of the mainland was impressive. On Adams Island there were loads of bellbirds; some so inquisitive they would come and peck my fingers; and the mega herbs were everywhere – such amazing huge plants. There appeared to be a lot more penguin sign here too. During the trip I also visited the Southwest Cape to do an egg count at a white-capped albatross nest site. These birds build nests like miniature volcanos.

Q: And the lows?

The wind; it blew a gale most days. Did you

see the stats that are on the website?
(www.yellow-eyedpenguin.org.nz)

Q: So what was the weather like?

We had all four seasons twice every day. We had thick driving snow, hail and rain, but the sun did come out sometimes, I think the temperature climbed to double figures once.

Q: How did you prepare for the trip?

I didn't read any books about the place because I wanted to experience it first. I made sure I kept my fitness level up. And not knowing how grubby I would get, or how often I could shower, I had a number one haircut.

Q: What was the accommodation like on the *Tiama*?

Very cramped but well set up and comfy. I got to know Steve the crewman very well as I was tossed out of my hammock above him several times, but we all got on well – it was great team dynamics, each of us contributing different skills. Henk the captain and Steve were great crew,

including their skills in the galley – takeaways and drop-offs were appreciated as we walked the coastlines. The diesel stove was a godsend 'cos we got wet every day getting in and out of the inflatable boat so it got a bit steamy at times in the cabin as things dried out.

Q: Before you left, we heard you were a bit nervous about encounters with sea lions, so how was it?

When you have half a ton of wild animal bearing down on you, your instinct is to run, so yes I did climb a tree or two. They were not aggressive, just curious and would follow you like a dog. We would all carry a stick just in case we needed to keep them at a distance. However, by the end of the trip I got used to them. The undergrowth was so thick that the only way through was to follow the sea lion and pig tracks.

Q: Were there any problems or accidents?

Not that I can remember; but we were all very conscious that help was a long way away and

Enjoy these colour pages highlighting the beauty of these islands.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CALLUM LILLEY



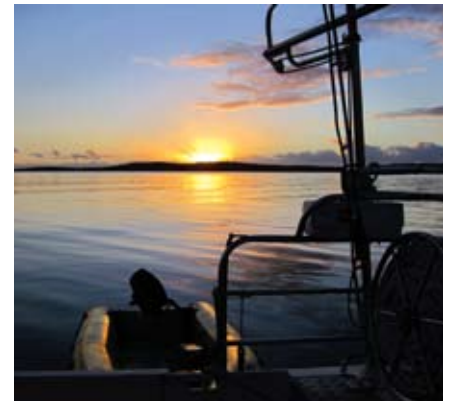
Megaherbs



Captain Henk



First mate Steve



you didn't take risks either onshore or on board the boat. I had to do a few things that were outside of my comfort zone which was a great learning curve. One day we had engine issues and had to paddle back under the watchful eye of those still on the *Tiama*. Henk, being an engineer; quickly had the repairs underway and we were off again.

Q: It used to be farmed so was there much sign of those early inhabitants?

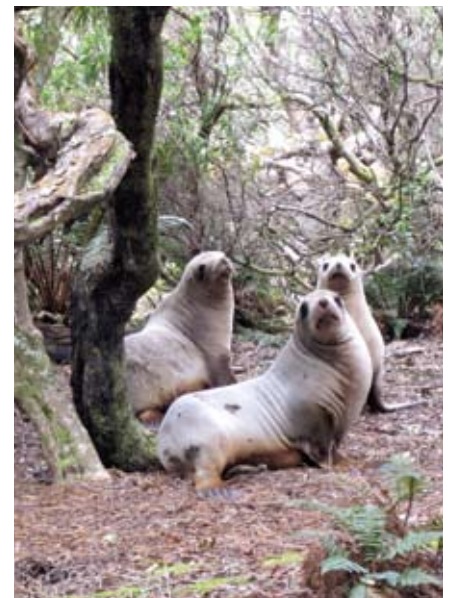
There were old roads still visible and partial remains of buildings. We found some fingerposts – these are signposts directing lost people to a hut or supplies. We also found a shipwreck that had not previously been mapped, although it was known to be there. That was cool. There was plenty of evidence of the 20th century with plastic bottles washed up. I found a large ship buoy on Ewing Island, the largest Henk had seen, so it was duly celebrated with a bottle of *Tiama* wine.

Q: Would you go back? [Leith hesitated]

This was such special trip, in part due to the access permits to some of the more unusual areas of the island. But, yep, I reckon I would like to go again, if only it wasn't so bloody windy! ■



PHOTO COURTESY OF CALLUM LILLEY



Codfish Island / Whenua Hou count drops



Student's perspective

By Christian Gunter, SIT Environmental Management Student

I had the opportunity of accompanying Sandy King – the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust's Project Officer Southern Islands – on her 2010 reproductive success survey on the yellow-eyed penguins on Codfish Island/ Whenua Hou, which took place from the 4th to the 10th of February. The opportunity arose out of a collaborative initiative between the Southern Institute of Technology and the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust.

The trip was quite an adventurous expedition. Taking off from Invercargill airport we flew over the blue ocean in a four-seated Cessna to land on the beach of the secluded 14 km² Codfish Island/Whenua Hou. Conservation and the protection of biodiversity took on a whole different meaning while I was bush bashing with Jo Hiscock from DOC (Island Management Outlying Islands) and Sandy. The thick shrubs, ferns and supple-jack made the task of spotting and catching penguins a daunting one, but with the knowledge and experience of Sandy we got along just fine.

I also had the chance to go along with the two kakapo rangers, Steve Horn and Dana Boyte on one of their routine checks around the Island, where I received some hands-on experience on how to locate kakapo.

The population census of yellow-eyed penguins in the Stewart Island area was completed in November 2009 when the last remaining area to be surveyed, Codfish Island/ Whenua Hou, was visited. The survey of Codfish Island was postponed in the 2008/09 summer because kakapo were expected to breed (which they did!) and the island becomes a very busy place. Work that isn't constrained by season is generally deferred to a less busy time, and such was the case for our survey. Kakapo had a break from breeding in the 2009 summer, enabling the yep survey to go ahead.



Lying about 3km off the north-west corner of Stewart Island, Codfish Island was last surveyed for yep in 2001. Being completely free of land-based predators it is considered one of the strongholds of the Stewart Island yep population, and has been one of the study sites for the Trust's research into factors affecting yep breeding success.

In late October 2009 two of the original surveyors, Dave Houston and Dean Nelson from DOC and Sandy King from the Trust, spent a week repeating the 2001 survey, with some help from resident kakapo rangers, Errol & Steve. They found only 46 breeding pairs, a drop from 61 breeding pairs in 2001. Given that breeding success is generally good we expected that the yep population on Codfish Island would be stable, so the result from the recent survey was a surprise and a little alarming. This could be a real downwards trend, or it could be just an extreme interannual fluctuation. It will be important to know which, and whether the apparent downwards trend is in fact real. Adult mortality is one factor to be considered if the population is declining. Another repeat survey is tentatively scheduled for 2011.

The addition of the Codfish survey data to the rest of Stewart Island data surveyed in 2008/09 (107-123 breeding pairs) gives a revised population estimate of 153-176 pairs for Stewart Island and close outliers.

Nests located during the Codfish survey were visited again in February by Sandy King, ably assisted by Jo Hiscock from DOC, kakapo ranger Dana, and Christian Gunter, a student from SIT studying environmental management. Fifty-four chicks were caught, weighed and measured, given a health check, and had a microchip inserted just under the skin on the back of their necks. Microchipping will enable individual birds to be identified in future, which in turn will provide information about juvenile and adult survival and recruitment. It is important that this work continues each season so we can get a more accurate picture of what is happening to the Codfish Island yep population. Most of the chicks caught were in good condition; the median weight was 5.15kg and weights ranged from 2.3-6.3kg. Overall breeding success this season was 58%, with each nest producing an average of 1.15 chicks.



From left: Christian, Sandy, Steve Horn, Dana Boyte, & Jo Hiscock

Bravo yep breeding success averages 52%

The Bravo Islands have been monitored annually since 2004 and monitoring there continued this season. Breeding success has fluctuated from 27% - 69% and averaged 52% over five seasons. Nests were located on five islands within the group in October 2009 by Sandy King (YEPT) and Phred Dobbins (DOC, Stewart Island), and rechecked by Sandy in December. In late January Sandy and a team of volunteers caught 19 chicks. In general the chicks seemed a little underweight with only one chick weighing over 5kg. Six chicks weighed less than 4.5kg, and two of these were less than 4kg. If we assume that these two very lightweight chicks didn't make it to fledging,

then the breeding success for the 2009/10 season is 52%.

Microchips have been inserted into cohorts of Bravo chicks annually since February 2006 and since that time we have had five re-sights. One of these was picked up dead from Oreti Beach on the Southland coast, but the other four were found alive – two as juveniles at the end of their first year and two as adults. One of the adults was on a nest at just two years old. Three of the four live re-sights weighed less than 4.5kg in the February just before they fledged, showing that these lightweight birds can survive, so it is not unreasonable to suppose that most of the chicks from this season could survive in spite of

seeming a bit underweight.

Once again, we have to thank the Department of Conservation Southern Islands Area, and Stewart Island Water Taxi and Eco Guiding for continuing to support work on Stewart Island. This season we also thank Te Manu Adventures and Petra Davis for support and donations. Special thanks also to volunteers Joanna Filmer, Annett Eiselt, Claire Kilner, James Dudfield, Antje Leseberg, Bart and Christina Kempnaers, and Elizabeth Flesch for help in the field.

Sandy will be taking a break from Stewart Island next summer and a range of possible backup scenarios are in the pipeline.

Valuing community group contributions to conservation

By Ned Hardie-Boys.

The Trust was one of the community groups asked to participate in the research for the following article. The abstract published here is courtesy of the Department of Conservation, Wellington, New Zealand.

Community groups make an important contribution to the conservation of New Zealand's natural and historic heritage, yet we do not have a clear understanding of the economic significance of this contribution or the conservation achievements it brings. Therefore, 362 community partners of the Department of Conservation were surveyed to find out about the types and benefits of their partnership arrangements, and to estimate the value of the resources they contribute to conservation activities. In total, 201 (56%) of these community partners responded to the survey. Almost half (47.5%) of these had informal partnership arrangements, while 43.5% had a formalised agreement. Groups carried out a wide range of activities, with 58.3% involved in ecological restoration, 57.8% in conservation awareness and publicity, and 55.3% in pest control. The groups had a total annual income of around \$12 million, but this income was unevenly distributed, with five groups (3.6%)

accounting for 50.8% of all income. For every \$1 of government funding, groups received, on average, \$1.34 of income from non-government sources. The groups involved 6232 volunteers who gave 174,812 hours of labour over a year. This equates to around 233 full-time equivalent volunteers, or 21,850 workday equivalents. Thus, the total financial value contributed by the groups over 12 months was estimated at \$15.8 million, which represents a return of \$3–\$4 for every \$1 of government funding contributed through grants or contracts. In terms of conservation outcomes, groups were making the greatest contribution to increasing community participation and the

least contribution to improving historic/cultural heritage. Groups identified a lack of funding as the main obstacle to their success. While acknowledging that the full implications of the results are not yet known, the report concludes by identifying 29 recommendations to support improvements in policy making and planning, and service delivery in relation to working with the community and voluntary sector.

Published in *Science for Conservation* 299. 68 p.
This publication is now in press and can be downloaded from:
<http://www.doc.govt.nz/upload/documents/science-and-technical/sfc299entire.pdf>



Sue Murray addressing volunteers before start of planting at Long Point in April

PHOTO COURTESY OF JANET LEDINGHAM

Long Point / Irahuka opens to curious public



Sir Alan Mark and Jim Young by new sign

Fencing and carpark formation at Long Point/ Irahuka has been completed and directional signage is also in place. Local South Otago fencing contractor Aaron Sutherland, and excavation contractor Dave Hopkins did a great job in often steep terrain. A lower carpark, where Long Point road meets the coast, gives public access to Helena Falls Beach. A walking route from the top carpark above the *Manuka* shipwreck memorial takes explorers to Long Point itself. Expect to take about 20-25 minutes from the carpark to the point.

Interpretation panels to explain some of the significant natural and historical features of the area are planned in the near future.

The Lance Richdale Trust formed

A proposed book on the life of Dr Lance Richdale, pioneer penguin and albatross scientist, has taken another step forward with the formation of The Lance Richdale Trust. A joint venture by the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust and the Otago Peninsula Trust, this new trust was established as an independent body to fundraise for the research and writing of this biography.

If you have any information about Dr Richdale, please contact Chris Robertson cjrr@slingshot.co.nz or Neville Peat npeat@clearnet.nz

Please remember us in your Will

Managing and/or purchasing penguin breeding habitat and controlling predators such as stoats and ferrets are some of our ongoing tasks. **Saving the yellow-eyed penguin is a long-term task.** Bequests will help secure the hoiho's survival. Please remember the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust in your Will.

Charities Commission Registration Number CC22822

Trapping data at Long Point / Irahuka and Cosgrove Creek, South Otago

By Jim Young

Sixty trap sites at 200m intervals have been set up across Long Point and Cosgrove Creek including the coast between the two areas. The traps are a variety of types designed to catch likely predators / pests, and one-quarter of the sites have tracking tunnels that record footprints of animals passing through.

Two checks have been completed with the following results:

DATE	ANIMALS CAUGHT / TRACKED						
		possum	stoats	hedgehog	mouse	rat	cat
26 March	caught	6	3	7	0	1	0
	tracks	1	2	3	2	0	1
09 April	caught	5	2	6	0	0	0
	tracks	2	2	0	1	0	2

Also 111 pitfall traps have been dug in and 89 artificial cover objects (ACOs) are placed and baited to monitor ground dwelling animals, especially lizards. Initial results from these show the presence of skinks at one site.

Enclosures will be put in place over the next month to study the effects that stopping grazing would have on the pasture and native turf around Long Point.

Sooty shearwater (titi) burrows have been investigated by burrow scoping equipment at two sites with seven chicks identified from 40 burrows.

The Trust is grateful for the scientific advice and mentoring from Dr Bill Lee & Deb Wilson (Landcare Research), Jamie Newman (Department of Zoology, University of Otago), and Mandy Tocher (Department of Conservation Science & Research).

Annual yellow-eyed penguin symposium

7 August 2010

The annual Yellow-eyed Penguin Symposium is a community-based event where people and organisations who work with yellow-eyed penguins can report back on their year's activities. All members of the yep community are invited to attend and present on the year past and what were the highlights.

The afternoon sessions are themed. Recent examples have included impacts of tourism, disease events in yep and the use of models in yep conservation. This year our theme is of course biodiversity. The day is quite informal and provides a great opportunity for people to network and discuss yep matters.

The Symposium is organised by the Yellow-eyed Penguin Consultative Group on behalf of yep groups and individuals.

For further information and venue details contact Bruce McKinlay (03) 474-6939 or bmckinlay@doc.govt.nz



Let's plant! Community Work Days

Sunday 6 June - Okia Reserve, Otago Peninsula. Meet at Dick Rd carpark, 10am.

Friday 23 July - Tavora Reserve, North Otago. Meet at carpark off Goodwood Road, 10am.

Bring spades, warm clothes, food and drink. For more information contact the YEPT office on (03) 479-0011 or email yeptrust@gmail.com and check our website www.yellow-eyedpenguin.org.nz



YEP's Backyard

By Monika Fry, Megabright

The YEP's Backyard project (<http://www.megabright.co.nz/YEP/home.html>) was a nine-week science and technology project which took place at the end of 2009.

Students were invited to learn about the life and threats to the yellow-eyed penguin using a De Bono technique known as Points of View. So, after looking at yellow-eyed penguins from a dog, tourist/photographer, sea lion, local hoon, farmer, DOC, a fisherman, their own and a penguin, the students attempted to design a yellow-eyed penguin-friendly habitat restoration plan. This work was given feedback by local penguin experts.

It took some time for the teachers and students to move away from the idea of designing 'enclosures' and feeding the penguins, but eventually some of the results were very appealing, particularly a penguin 'snuff' movie made by all of the students of Halfmoon Bay School, Stewart Island. This was entitled *YEPs Good and Bad* (www.youtube.com/watch?v=fjOQpalaBFc).

Beckenham Primary School in Christchurch used the Google Doodles concept to design posters using the words 'yellow-eyed penguin' with each letter cleverly spelling out either a threat or what makes an ideal habitat (www.megabright.co.nz/YEP/Beckenham_Primary_School_tops.html). Their skilful pieces of work showed that the students had done a lot of research on the topic.



Cara, Beckenham Primary School



Oliver, Beckenham Primary School



PHOTO COURTESY OF HALFMOON BAY SCHOOL

South Island yep tallies

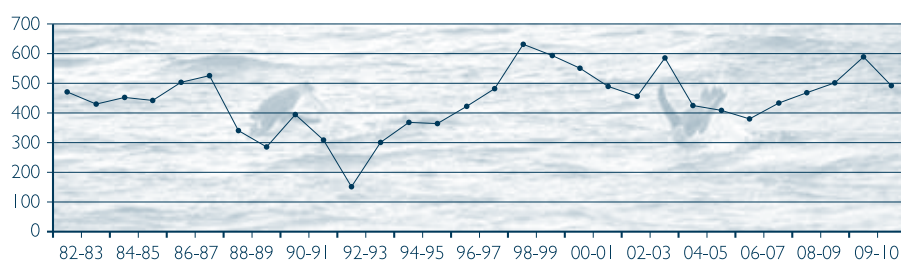
The magic number of 486 is this season's minimum estimate of breeding pairs on the mainland of New Zealand, down from the 2008/09 high of 583.

At all of the Trust sites, with the exception of Cosgrove Creek, the numbers of breeding pairs followed the same pattern, with lower nest numbers. But the end result of reproductive success was generally higher. This is the calculation from the number of chicks fledged, divided by the number of eggs laid.

By contrast, Cosgrove Creek, in the Catlins, had a disappointing season, with all the indicators such as nest numbers, eggs laid, chicks fledged and average weight showing a decline compared with 2008-2009. It is hoped that predator trapping, which will be in place for the first time at Cosgrove Creek in the 2010-2011 season, will have a positive effect on reducing the number of missing eggs and abandoned nests.

In general, the Trust is pleased with results at the various reserves, and chick weights were above the 2008-2009 figures, indicating a good food year.

Estimated minimum number of breeding yellow-eyed penguins on mainland NZ



Cadbury Peninsula Day

Join us on an exclusive tour to view yellow-eyed penguins at YEPT's private reserve, Otapahi.

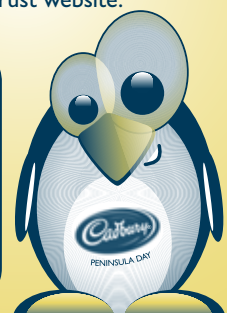
Bus transport will leave Portobello at 3.00pm and return by 5.15pm with transport continuing to Dunedin.

More information will be available closer to the time via the Cadbury® Chocolate Carnival brochure and on www.chocolatecarnival.co.nz and on the Trust website.

OTAGO
PENINSULA DAY
SUNDAY 17 JULY

LEAVES
PORTOBELLO 3PM

BOOKINGS
ESSENTIAL



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Sir Alan Mark
University of Otago (Jamie Newman)
Valley Industries
WHK

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