



# Hoiho

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## Jobs for Nature

*One of the first tasks for new rangers Max Harvey and Catherine (Cat) Lea was clearing an access track to Okia Reserve on Otago Peninsula*

**The Trust is delighted to introduce two new staff, both Rangers, who started work in early-September. Max Harvey (Ranger-Technical) and Catherine Lea (Ranger-Hoiho) are employed for two years thanks to a grant from DOC's Jobs for Nature initiative.**

This grant also allows the Trust to retain two positions that are currently funded from capital reserves, a situation that was only possible until the end of 2021. This grant means that both Ben Goldsworthy (Ranger) and David McFarlane (Long Point Project Manager) have their respective positions secured for a further two years.

The government invested \$1.245 billion in Jobs for Nature to help revitalise communities through nature-based employment and

stimulate the economy post-COVID-19. The funding is to help projects create temporary jobs on private and public conservation land. In 2020 the Department of Conservation was allocated over \$500 million to create nature-based job opportunities for around 6,000 people over a four-year period.

Jobs Increasing Hoiho Conservation: the story of a taonga species, is our project and through this increased capacity, will enable the Trust to accelerate our work programme to help save hoiho and its habitat. The work of monitoring hoiho is very labour-intensive, seven days a week and out of normal work hours. Having this increased capacity will allow for greater coverage and more flexibility of where the effort is required, both in frequency of monitoring and location of monitoring.

Minister of Conservation Kiritapu Allan

announced this funding, alongside eight other southern projects which will see 187 jobs created through the investment of \$17.5million. Pest eradication was a major part of several of these projects. Others were for weed control, plant nurseries and planting.

In October the Trust was delighted to host JFN Chief Advisor Reg Kepler and the Dunedin-based team of Delivery Manager Shay van der Hurk, Senior Advisor Gerome ten Velde and Analyst Amy Phipps. After lunch and an introduction to plant propagation at the Nursery, the team headed to Okia Reserve on Otago Peninsula to view some of the work being undertaken on this reserve – see page seven. Unfortunately, no penguins were spotted coming ashore, but the views as always were stunning.

See also the celebration of Rangers on pages four and five inside this issue.



# Passion and commitment

REFLECTIONS ON THE  
2021 YEP SYMPOSIUM, 7 AUGUST,  
DUNEDIN

By Bruce McKinlay, DOC

I'm biased as I helped organise the day and I've been to a few of them over the years. These vary in the number of presentations depending on what's going on.

What doesn't vary is the passion and commitment of the people in the room.

As is normal, the best part of the day is the morning tea and the lunches as this is where the real work gets done as friends and colleagues from across the island catch up.

The presentations showed the complexity of delivering hoiho conservation. The first session report backs were of extremely high quality, and it was good to see the actual workers, the kaimahi, who do the work standing up and talking about their stuff.

We work in an environment with incomplete knowledge and without control of all the factors that affect hoiho. This was demonstrated in the report backs and the research summaries.

However, the research is changing our context: the summary by Thomas Mattern showed how much more we know about hoiho foraging and use of marine habitats than say ten years ago; the report by Antoine Filion showed improved knowledge about the cycling of malaria; Abby Clarke's continuing efforts to understand the role of probiotics in the care of young Hoiho is revealing the complexity of this work; and the summaries by Clara Schlieman on the diversity of work being undertaken to investigate fisheries were impressive.

Although the symposium only goes for about seven hours, it packs a lot in. I expect next year's to be as good.



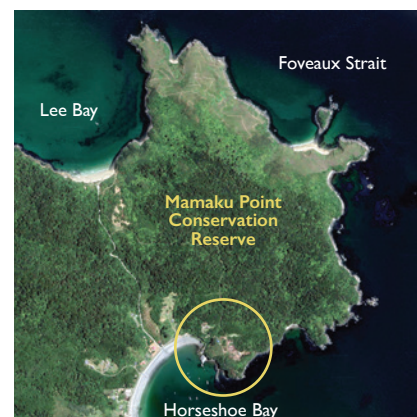
# Mamaku reserve initiative

Following the low numbers of hoiho found during last season's collaborative survey of the Rakiura Stewart Island coastline, the team is determined to do what it can to stem the decline. The hoiho population has declined by a massive 71% over a twelve year period – from 154 breeding pairs in 2008 to just 44 pairs in 2020.

The Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust has secured funding from both the Pacific Development Conservation Trust and a private family trust to establish a rehabilitation facility and purchase equipment to enable us to monitor and assist birds that need help on Rakiura.

The plan is to build capacity on Rakiura to provide support similar to that on the mainland so that underweight birds can be supplementary fed for a short period of time before being released back to the wild. Supplementary feeding of underweight fledglings was trialed at a couple of nest sites in Rakiura over the past two years. This was generously supported by the Department of Conservation and Sanfords who provided smolt from their salmon farm in Big Glory Bay.

The Trust is working closely with the Mamaku Point Conservation Trust to establish a facility at their privately-owned and operated conservation reserve inside a predator-proof fence. The site is relatively close to Oban with good road and sea access, and already has power and water connected. (Mamaku is the black



tree fern and fittingly, a symbol of new life.)

Conservation work on Rakiura is logistically more challenging than on the mainland; some of the hoiho colonies are on small islands or rugged beaches best accessed by boat and then on foot. The rehabilitation centre is within about 20km of several hoiho colonies, so is well placed to provide the much needed support.

Local runaka and whanau groups have been very supportive of this increased programme of monitoring and conservation intervention work with hoiho, particularly through the Kaitiaki Roopu Murihiku Advisory Committee conservation forum and the Whenua Hou committee.

The Trust is hopeful for the future, and look forward to continuing the hard mahi alongside local runaka and whanau, the Department of Conservation and others to ensure the ongoing survival of these precious birds on Rakiura.



Photo: Southland Ecological Restoration Network



## Two hoiho reserves then and now

### TE RERE RESERVE 26 YEARS ON

The 68-hectare Te Rere Reserve on the east Southland coast, owned by Forest and Bird Southland since 1989, experienced a devastating fire on 28 February 1995. Some of the original rata and kamahi forest was destroyed and 54 yellow-eyed penguins were killed.

The fire was thought to have resulted from a burn-off on adjacent farmland which had been smouldering since the previous November, and high winds reignited embers that blew into the reserve. At the time this reserve was recovering from land clearing, showcased by people such as Jacques Cousteau, and was home to about 100+ hoiho, of which only 50-odd survived the fire.

Roll on forty years to 2021 and the reserve has bounced back thanks to the dedication of Forest and Bird Southland, their volunteers and in 1995, their employment of a part-time caretaker, Fergus Sutherland. With about half the remnant forest remaining, Forest and Bird Southland oversaw the planting of thousands of new trees, shrubs and flax.

The reserve area has been extended and fenced thanks to the generosity of the neighbouring Yorke family, QEII National Trust and other donors. Fergus has undertaken active predator control and hoiho monitoring since 1995. All of this was guided by a Management Plan drawn up for the Reserve Management Committee in 1995. This committee includes representation from the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust.

However, despite the team's best efforts, hoiho numbers fluctuated over recent years (25 nests in 2011), and last season hit an all-time low with only five nests found, a pattern found amongst the rest of the mainland population. Other species continue to enjoy the restoration efforts and are thriving within the reserve. These include the endangered NZ sealion, the peripatus or velvet worm, little penguins, sooty shearwater/titi and many species of forest birds.

At the recent Yellow-eyed Penguin Symposium, Forest and Bird called for others to keep the pressure up on government for a change in the fishing industry, continue climate change mitigation measures, and to support all who are working to save hoiho.

The annual Te Rere planting day is 4th of December (Covid willing). Anyone interested in helping should contact Chris and Brian Rance at [rances@southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz](mailto:rances@southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz)

### OKIA RESERVE 30 YEARS ON

The original site of a 1980s proposed aluminium smelter became the Trust's first owned reserve in 1991. This 231 hectare piece of land on Otago Peninsula known as Victory Beach, or Okia Flats, was jointly purchased by the Trust and Dunedin City Council.

This was made possible with financial support from Mainland Products fundraising campaign, the DCC, the Stout Trust, the McMillan Trust and member donations. The area was given reserve status by the then Minister of Conservation Denis Marshall and a Reserve Management Plan was established which, with revision, still guides any work on the reserve today.

Okia is otherwise known as Victory Beach, named after the steamship 'Victory' which ran aground on 3 July 1861 on a voyage from Melbourne to Dunedin carrying mail, cargo and passengers. Today there only remains the ship's flywheel which is exposed at low tide close to the mouth of the inlet.

The original landowner retained the grazing licence for the area until 1994 when 'controlled/no grazing' was removed from the management plan. Today, no grazing takes place within the reserve, except by pests such as possums and rabbits.

The southern end of the reserve borders Papanui Inlet and was home to several cribs whose owners leased the land. As leases expired, cribs were removed and today there is nobody living within the reserve itself.

It is an important geological, botanical and Māori cultural site.

Okia is the site of the Pyramids, two distinctive rock formations created by columns of basalt during the first eruptive phase of volcanic activity in the area. One of the Pyramids has a "chimney" climbing through its interior. The ends of the tilted basalt columns are seen as rosettes set into Okia's cliffs.

A study at the time of purchase showed flora included 16 species found nowhere else on the Peninsula.

It was also the site of important Māori battles and a number of prehistoric sites have been identified. A totara waka hull excavated from a sand dune at Papanui Inlet in 2015 is believed to be close to 500 years old, and is the first waka unearthed on the Otago Peninsula.



# A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF A HOIHO

## RANGER



WORLD RANGER DAY acknowledges the critical work of rangers on the front line of conservation across the globe. Celebrated annually on July 31, it is a chance to acknowledge the amazing things our team does. Being a ranger isn't always glamorous, but the work is important and some of the places they get to are pretty neat.

At the Trust, rangers are employed predominantly to undertake the critical hoiho monitoring, reserve maintenance and predator control. However, they often have to turn their hands to others tasks such as:

- > Tradies: carpentry, fencing, landscaping and gardeners
- > Vet nurses
- > Animal husbandry specialists
- > Event organisers
- > Detectives
- > Project managers
- > Teachers
- > Logistics managers (loggies)
- > Snipers
- > Public relations
- > Diplomats.

Our team of hard-working rangers are Ben Goldsworthy, Sarah Irvine, Max Harvey and Cat Lea. We thank them for the mahi they do caring for our taonga species and their natural environment. Enjoy this montage of photos that depicts some of the tasks they do throughout the year.



jan Sarah records data as part of hoiho monitoring.



feb Tavora Reserve is closed annually to minimise any disturbance to hoiho. Ben removes the closed sign.



feb Sarah works with two Sir Peter Blake Ambassadors, showing them Irahuka Long Point Field Base.



mar Ben stands beside soft-release pens with chicks inside waiting to be released so they can go on their first swim.



may Sarah and a volunteer planting on the reserve at Irahuka Long Point.



jun Ben cutting access tracks at Okia Reserve.



jun Beach clean-ups recover all sorts of hazardous rubbish, including these crayfish pots.



jul But wait... there's more! Louise (YEPT Nursery Supervisor) and Ben dragging away a fishing net.



jul Thanks to Macpac's 'Fund For Good' grant, our rangers and other staff were donated some new Macpac outdoor gear.



jul YEPT and DOC rangers working together at Irahuka Long Point Field Base.



jul Ben secures a donated washer and drier for cleaning clothes contaminated with penguin poo and the like.



jul Ben works with Otago Polytechnic horticulture students planting in the scrub at Okia Reserve.



sep Max penguin-proofs new cages kindly donated by Dog Rescue Dunedin.



sep Working in the pouring rain, Ben frees plants from invasive weeds.



sep Coastal erosion caused by exceptionally high tides is becoming more frequent. Cat and Max stand on top of the latest sand cliff at Okia Reserve.



sep Max learns to bait a predator trap at Otekiho Reserve.



sep Ben checks the condition of the latest plantings by staff members at Tavora Reserve.



oct Cat holds a decoy hoiho used to attract hoiho to a breeding area.



nov Ben checks a very small hoiho chick for disease.



dec The Christmas BBQ wouldn't be the same without whipped cream to go with dessert.

sep A stunning place to work as Cat checks a trap at Otekiho Reserve at the entrance to Otago Harbour

*Penguins. Plants. People. Passion.*





Steve Anderson at Otapahi Reserve on Otago Peninsula in 2019



Lou Sanson was a keynote speaker at the Conservation Inc2 Conference in 2016

## People who make a difference

Huge congratulations to several close associates who received a Queen's Birthday Honour. They were trustees **Lala Frazer** QSM (a founding trustee) and **Hoani Langsbury**, who were both awarded a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM) for services to conservation which includes their commitment to the Trust and saving hoiho.

Alongside them, Hoiho Governance Group co-chair **Yvette Couch-Lewis** was awarded an MNZM for services to conservation and Māori, and Banks Peninsula Pohatu Reserve owners **Frances and Shireen Helps** were each awarded an MNZM for services to wildlife conservation.

The New Zealand Order of Merit is awarded to people who have served the Crown or country with merit or become distinguished in any field. It was established in 1996 to replace the British state honours that were still being used to pay tribute to New Zealanders at that time.

**Steve Anderson**, a long-time friend and supporter of the Trust, has retired after 20 years as chief executive for Foodstuffs South Island.

In the 1990s, Steve worked for Mainland Products, the Trust's founding sponsor. The interest he acquired in our penguins at that time has not waned.

As a representative on the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust Board, his commercial

background proved invaluable when making decisions on new ventures. And as his career progressed, Steve remained a business mentor to the Trust. His advice on Trust governance prompted reforms which serve us very well today.

After Fonterra Brands NZ purchased the Mainland Brand, Steve always ensured that Fonterra's senior managers were introduced to the Trust and to hoiho. This first-hand experience of the penguins has been absolutely crucial to Fonterra's continued sponsorship. Whenever his duties allowed, Steve accompanied the Fonterra teams on their trips south. In 2019, he hosted Fonterra CEO Mike Hurrell and Fonterra Brands Managing Director Brett Henshaw on a very early dawn excursion to see hoiho departing their Otago Peninsula breeding sites to forage at sea.

We are extremely grateful to Steve for his generous support and thoughtful advice. We wish him well in what's ahead for him and his family.

One of the consequences of Covid-19 Alert Levels meant outgoing Department of Conservation Te Papa Atawhai Director General **Lou Sanson** was not given the usual fanfare farewell. And he deserves one!

Lou has dedicated his life to conservation and New Zealand's natural world after growing up on the West Coast, and since 1987 has held significant leadership roles in environmental organisations.

The Trust first met Lou when he held the newly formed role of DOC's Conservator for Southland (1998 – 2002) and we were looking at undertaking the first full population census of hoiho on Rakiura Stewart Island. He left DOC for a few years to be chief executive for Antarctica New Zealand, returning to DOC in 2013 as Director General.

This role was responsible for a third of New Zealand's land area, about 8 million hectares of alpine zones, native forests, national parks, wetlands, lakes, marine reserves and offshore islands, all delivered by a staff roll ranging between 1900 and 2500 full time equivalents and with a budget of about \$600 million.

Lou was renowned as a people leader – he truly values relationships which ultimately go on to form partnerships.

Over the years Lou has been very supportive of the Trust, our role and work to save hoiho. He opened conferences and was a keynote speaker, and he always had time for a catch up when in Dunedin. At times he was inundated with issues surrounding hoiho, lobbied by numerous people, including the Trust, on issues from funding, to marine protected areas, and more. But he remained open to listening, probably cursing the penguin or the Trust at times. We hope he will continue to catch up with us when in Dunedin and in between his plans to help paint some back-country huts and other volunteer conservation-based tasks.



# Buttery treats for Christmas



As we wind down another year, it seems an opportune time to take a moment and reflect on the year Mainland has had.

Dedicated to making cheese more conveniently available to kiwi families, we've introduced some new products to the Mainland family. We launched Mainland Cheese and Artisan Crackers which are perfect hunger buster for those inbetween meal tummy grumbles. We also introduced a larger family-friendly sized pack of natural cheese slices in Tasty and Edam variants – larger packs mean fewer shops and less plastic wastage, not to mention you'll always have some slices in the fridge to add that delicious punch to your sandwiches and burgers.

We are also grateful for the love and

support that New Zealand have shown us, voting us most Trusted Cheese Brand and having industry experts honour us with gold medals won across Mainland Vintage, Epicure and Double Cream Camembert at the New Zealand Cheese Awards.

Looking forward, we're so excited that Christmas is around the corner. If you are looking for some creative solutions this gifting season, why not try your hand at baking our deliciously buttery shortbread treats or gingerbread cookies? Recipes available here: [www.mainland.co.nz/recipe/buttery-shortbread.html](http://www.mainland.co.nz/recipe/buttery-shortbread.html) and [mainland.co.nz/recipe/gingerbread-cookies.html](http://mainland.co.nz/recipe/gingerbread-cookies.html)

Keep well and take care of each other. We look forward to seeing you again in the new year.



YEPT Long Point Project Manager Dave McFarlane points out items of interest at Okia Reserve to the DOC team of Gerome, Amy, Reg and Shav. See the article on page one.



## Leave something in paradise

Please remember the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust in your Will. Your bequest can be invested in restoring penguin habitats and controlling predators to help secure the survival of hoiho.

Charities Commission Registration Number CC22822



## A note from the Chair

### Tēnā koutou katoa

It's November already and part of our planning for 2021-2022 involves taking measures to secure and retain our ongoing funding for our staff and for our production of conservation effort. Put simply; no staff = no delivery of conservation effort.

Of course, from time-to-time, all organisations experience episodes of uncertainty, particularly when the funding environment is challenging. In our case, there have been situations where the challenge has been how to respond to an unexpected withdrawal of what seemed like a long-term funding arrangement. Such an alteration may reflect a change in the circumstances of the funding body.

For example, we have enjoyed six years' Otago Regional Council funding of our Conservation Scientist position, but were unsuccessful in the most recent funding round. Fortunately, by dipping into donated capital, we have been able to retain the position in the short-term.

However, although currently capable of such a short-term fix, such a band-aid approach comes at the cost of our ability to engage in strategic planning. Nowadays, many funding applications include a question asking the amount of capital an organisation has in the bank, but provides little or no opportunity to explain how this capital may well already be allocated.

These explanations often are situated by the applicant within 'notes', there being no better place to put them. This may lead the funder to turn down the application on the grounds that the organisation appears to have too much unallocated capital. We have ourselves been on the receiving end of such an event and, subsequently, always try our hardest to make our descriptions and explanations as clear as possible.

Our success with Jobs for Nature, providing Rangers on the ground, reflects a substantial investment of staff time in preparing the funding application and then substantially more work in feeding back regular progress reports to DOC. This approach, paying close attention to detail when in the field while operating at a strategic level in the office, should serve us well.

All the boxes have been ticked and our team is ready to begin the new season.

Nga mai  
Eric J. Shelton  
Chair



## Our thanks

### Thank you to our regular supporters:

Supporters' Group  
Nursery supporters  
AdArt Brand Promotion  
Andy and Melissa Moore  
Blackhead Quarries  
Canon NZ  
Coffee Club supporters  
Department of Conservation  
DOC Community Fund  
Downie Stewart  
DCC (Task Force Green team)  
Dunedin Wildlife Hospital  
Foote Haulage (Woodlands)  
Forest and Bird South Otago Branch  
Jane and Jim Young  
Jobs for Nature  
Mainland Brand  
NZ Deerstalkers Association (Otago Branch)  
Otago Peninsula Biodiversity Group  
Otago Regional Council  
Penguin Place  
Penguin Rescue  
Richard Roberts, Dunedin Airport  
Roy Johnstone  
Yrless (Joe Stringer)

### Thank you for funding from:

City Forests  
Dunedin Airport  
Estate of Connie Wright  
Joan Mayes Charitable Trust  
Noopii  
Pacific Development and Conservation Trust  
Top 10 Holiday Park  
Woodland Eggs

Sincere thanks to all those people who make donations through our online portal. We truly appreciate this support.

### Special thanks this issue to:

Adam's Flags  
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Bay Road  
Bird Shirts  
Catlins Community Planting  
Clutha i-SITE  
Dave Alden and Elaine Slater  
Distinction Hotel Dunedin  
Dog Rescue Dunedin  
Dunedin Airport staff  
Edward Ivison  
John Edwards  
High Country Contracting  
Mac Pac  
Mamaku Point Conservation Trust  
Melissa Boardman  
Natty  
Owaka Information Centre  
Peter Guilder  
Solander Gourmet Seafoods  
Stitch Kitchen  
The Catlins Area School  
Wishbone Designs  
YEPT staff partners

### Thank you to:

All the landowners who have contributed to our habitat protection work

### Thank you to all Volunteers:

We are tremendously grateful to all the other volunteers, including the regular Nursery workers and the Habitat Volunteer Team for their valuable contributions to our work. Special thanks to AdArt Brand Promotion for the design of this newsletter.



The production of this Hoiho newsletter by AdArt Brand Promotion ticks all the green boxes

*Penguins. Plants. People. Passion.*

Level 1, John Wickliffe House  
265 Princes Street, Dunedin  
New Zealand 9016

Phone +64 3 479-0011

E-mail [enquiries@yeptrust.org.nz](mailto:enquiries@yeptrust.org.nz)

Web [www.yellow-eyedpenguin.org.nz](http://www.yellow-eyedpenguin.org.nz)

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