

Greetings

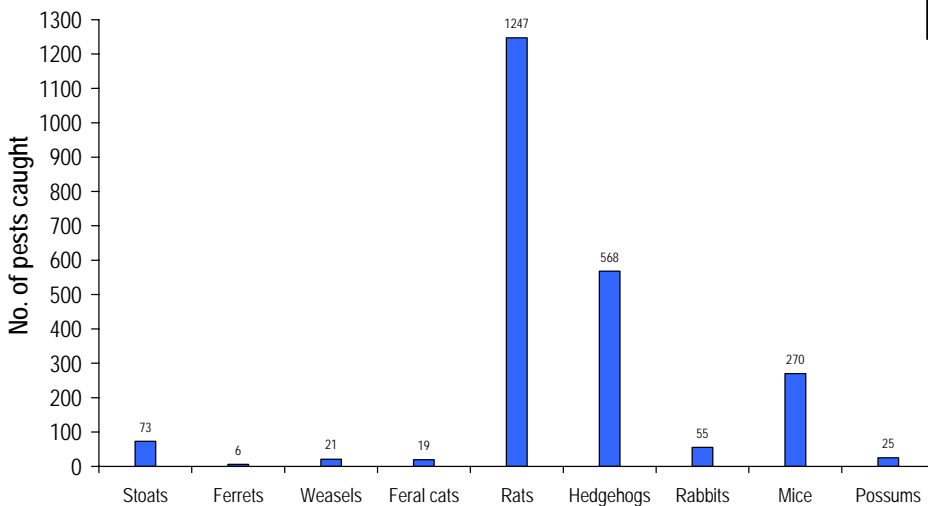
Welcome to the first Rotokare Bush Telegraph newsletter. We apologise for the delay in reporting our news to you and hope to do better in the future. As you can no doubt guess we have a lot of news to report. Our Chairman, Joe Menzies, and our esteemed Trustees have been very busy promoting Rotokare Scenic Reserve, monitoring trap lines, cutting tracks, accepting awards, putting in applications for money and generally pushing along our bid for establishing Rotokare as a Mainland Island. The predator trapping is well underway as is the planning for the predator proof fence.



Rotokare Mists – M.Sulzberger

Total Trap Figures to 3rd November

Rotokare Mainland Island total pest trap-catch



Many dead rats – M.Sulzberger

Awards

Members of Rotokare Trust were presented with a Taranaki Regional Council 2005 Environmental Award on June 29th.

We also received an Environmental Award from the Taranaki/Whanganui conservancy of the Department of Conservation.



Environmental Awards – M.Sulzberger

A Huge Thank You



A section of fence at Maungatautari - Oecologico

for predator control.

We'd like to take this opportunity to publicly thank Cees Bevers (Oecologico) for his efforts in researching and producing the Rotokare Sanctuary Feasibility Study which was funded by the South Taranaki District Council.

The TSB Community Trust has pledged \$1,250,000.00 to assist with the purchase, erection and maintenance of a pest proof fence. This resulted from a concerted effort by our Chairman, Trustees and our consultant Cees Bevers. They spent numerous hours preparing our application and presenting it to the TSB trustees. We are very grateful to these people and especially to the TSB Community Trust for having the foresight to be involved in our wonderful venture.

Thanks also to the Taranaki Electricity Trust for granting us \$110,000 for setting up an educational facility, an educator, species re-introduction and monitoring.

Other significant donors are; the South Taranaki District Council - \$15,000 for pest management; Swift Energy - \$1500 for pest control; Tap Oil NZ - \$5,000

Rotokare Birdlife

Since the intensive trapping programme has been up and running we have had reports from various people of significant interest to bird lovers and conservationists.

On September 15th Dean Caskey, Sue Caldwell and Mark and Leigh Caskey located a male kiwi in the Reserve.

Cees Bevers heard a kaka while walking around the lake walkway at approximately 11 a.m. on Saturday 24th September.

Cees believes there were 2 or 3 birds which were possibly in flight as the volume of their calls varied. They were heard calling for about 5 minutes.

Murray Sulzberger sighted a New Zealand falcon on farmland bordering the reserve. He was lucky enough to capture this event on film.



NZ Falcon – M. Sulzberger

Dog Ban



The South Taranaki District Council has imposed a dog ban in the Rotokare Reserve. This has been in place for over a year now and it is unfortunate to see that dogs are still being taken into the Reserve. Dogs are a major problem to our bird life, especially the kiwi, which we are trying our best to preserve. There are numerous signs advising lake users of the ban.

Boat Ramp



With summer fast approaching, and the lake opening to boaties on 1st December, the issue of the old boat ramp is quite topical. The existing ramp is deteriorating and in previous years has been patched up by the District Council. The Trustees would like to see a new and safer ramp put in. The Council has approved funding for this and we are just waiting approval by the Ngati Tupaea Hapu whose area of care and significance Lake Rotokare comes under. The boat ramp has been of some use for transporting traps to other areas of the lake in recent times as well.

Transporting traps – M.Sulzberger

Predator Proof Fence Up-date



Section of fence - Oecologico

We officially launched our feasibility Study on 22nd July at the Eltham Town Hall. The attendance for this was outstanding. Of note was the information about the Xcluder “Kiwi” fence which is the type Rotokare Trust is aiming to put in. Since that day our team of Chairman, Secretary, Trustees and Cees have been very busy applying for funding to realise our goal. Our main sponsor so far is the TSB Community Trust. We currently have an application in to the Department of Internal Affairs Significant Community Based Project Fund for the outstanding amount for the fence. The Taranaki

Kiwi Trust has helped considerably with that application. They have funded 15 hours of their Technical Adviser’s time and one of their trustees, Jenny Steven, has been invaluable. When we get the go ahead for the fence we will require assistance from volunteers to prepare the area for construction. We also have an initiative set up for people to sponsor a section of the fence as it goes up. Application form enclosed with this newsletter.

Hard but Rewarding Work

There are more than 400 rat traps at 50m intervals around the walkway and 3 lines in the bush and the boundary along the road. This equates to over 23km of rat lines cut through the bush. The Trust has volunteers checking and re-setting these at 2 weekly intervals.

To help keep the bush from reclaiming its own, the Trust utilises the assistance of The Corrections Department Periodic Workers on Saturdays. We have had groups from Hawera, Eltham and Stratford mostly clearing the tracks and eradicating barberry. These teams have made good progress over the last few months. We rely on volunteers to help oversee these operations.

The Trust has also organised many a working bee to help with track clearing and trap box making.



Track work – M.Sulzberger

Egmont A&P Show at Hawera



Egmont A&P Show display – M.Sulzberger



The Rotokare Scenic Reserve Trust set up a display at the Egmont A&P Show on November 18th and 19th. It was a chance to ‘show off’ what we had been doing. The Taranaki Regional Council kindly loaned us their ‘stuffed’ critters to add a little impact. The display consisted of our new

vinyl Logo posters, pests, traps, information sheets, photos of Bushy Park and Maungatautari fences, a sample of the Xcluder fence and of course some very knowledgeable Trustees (wearing the Rotokare polo shirts) to man it. The Trust launched two very important new projects on the day. The first being the ‘Sponsor a metre of Fence’ initiative and the other being the ‘Friends of the Lake’ volunteer group. A copy of these will be sent along with this newsletter.

Odd Spot



Have you ever wondered where the hens and roosters come from that seem to inhabit some rest areas and reserves around the country? Well, we’re almost certain they don’t fly there. We suspect they are escorted by the general public. Recently we had some mysteriously arrive at Lake Rotokare. Although they were quite attractive and beautifully marked unfortunately there is no place for domestic fowl at the Reserve, therefore they were treated as any other pest and disposed of appropriately.

Rotokare visitors – M.Sulzberger

How Can You Help?

We have several initiatives for the public to help us. Already several people have sponsored traps for the predator control within the Reserve. New out is the ‘Sponsor a metre of fence’ opportunity. We would also like to see a Supporters group set up to be ‘Friends of the Lake’. This would involve a regular ‘Friends’ newsletter, invitations to special events and sending out information packs to new and prospective members. There will be copies of the necessary forms made available with this newsletter.

If any of these opportunities to assist us appeal to you please contact the Trust.

Merchandise

The Rotokare Scenic Reserve Trust has blue polo shirts with the Rotokare logo embroidered on the left chest area. These are available at a cost of \$45 + GST. If you would like to purchase one please use the contact details below.



Joe modelling the shirt
– Rotokare Trust

Contact

Rotokare Scenic Reserve Trust
P.O. Box 167, ELTHAM
Taranaki, New Zealand

Ph: (06) 764 8561
Fax: (06) 764 8562