

BUSH TELEGRAPH



News from June-August & key events coming up in September-December
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September
2023

New Bush Classroom Opens

We are thrilled to announce the unveiling of the Rotokare Scenic Reserve Trust's brand-new bush classroom! This exciting addition to our sanctuary will provide children with a unique opportunity to learn in the heart of the ngahere.

Designed to be fit for purpose, it features interactive displays and educational resources that will immerse students in the wonders of nature. Each station within the classroom focuses on specific themes, including birds, reptiles, amphibians, and the traditional use of forests, reflecting the rich culture of Rotokare. Each station is also the home of one of 6 incredible ruru carvings from local carver Carol Hill.

Back in 2014, late sanctuary manager Simon Collins developed the original concept drawings for the classroom, and since then, our dedicated volunteers, staff, and trustees have worked tirelessly to bring this vision to life.

Pictures below (left to right): Tricia showing off the new sign at the bush classroom entrance, Indie Kyle speaking on behalf of her family, and late great-grandmother Gwen, a Bush Classroom station. STDC Mayor Phil Nixon and Rotokare Educator Sophie cutting the ribbon

The grand opening ceremony was attended by Rotokare Scenic Reserve Trust volunteers, trustees, staff and supporters, along with South Taranaki district mayor Phil Nixon. Together, they cut the ribbon, marking the beginning of an inspiring journey for our young learners.

The new facility was made possible by a generous bequest from Gwen Muller, a cherished life member of the trust, as well as contributions from Beach Energy. We are immensely grateful for their support, which has helped us create this remarkable learning space.

The construction of the bush classroom also relied on the invaluable contributions of time and effort from our dedicated team of volunteers. We extend our heartfelt thanks to Betts and Bishop Landscaping And Construction, who generously provided materials and labor to bring this project to fruition. At Rotokare, we rely on the backing of our community to make our projects a reality, and we are truly thankful for the support we receive.



THANK YOU!

The late Ian Irwin for his generous support

Taranaki Tramping Club for crampon donations

Ballance E shift for their help with construction of the new driveway to the lower shed

First Gas for their mahi helping with line clearing

Contact Energy for their mahi helping with earth ramping & veg trimming

Biodiversity & Sanctuary

Pāteke



A further 34 pāteke were released at Rotokare on July 31st, bolstering the existing population within the reserve. With breeding season underway pāteke ducklings have been spotted in a number of spots around the lake. A great sign the birds are establishing well!

Lizards



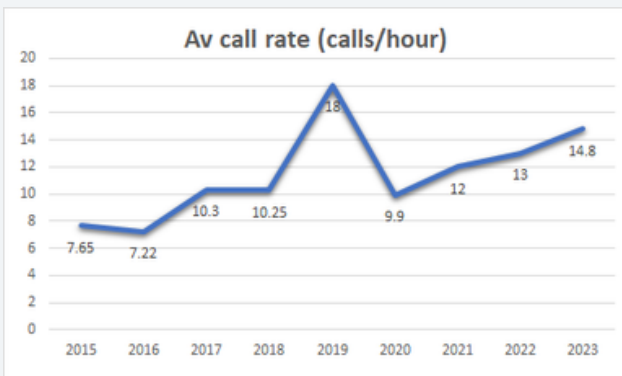
The team has just completed our Spring lizard survey. Over the cooler months, lizards are much less active and we have tended to find fewer in this survey session but was lucky to find a goldstripe gecko and plenty of shed skins! Our next survey is in November once things warm up.

Hihi



Hihi expert Mhairi McCready, (Hihi Conservation Charitable Trust) has kicked off this year's hihi census finding 63 banded birds across the Sanctuary. She's also found and banded another 7 birds from natural nests! A great start for this coming season.

Taranaki Kōhonga Kiwi at Rotokare (TKKR)



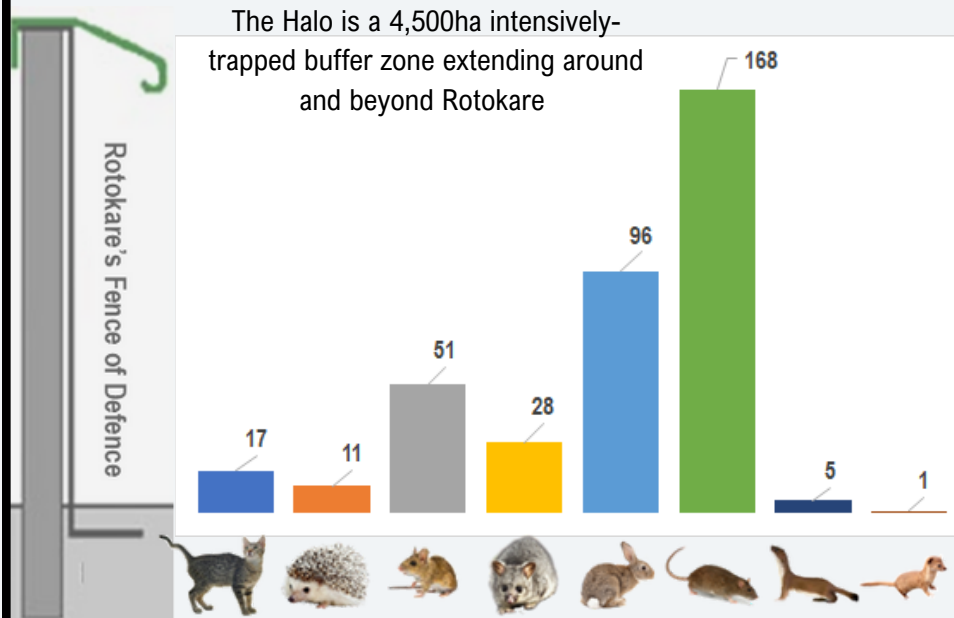
Kiwi call count surveys were undertaken within the reserve during June and July this year. Across both nights the average call rate was 14.8 calls per hour. A huge thank you to the team of volunteers who came and helped out with those surveys. As far as call count rates trends (chart to the left) there was drop in 2020 as this was after our first translocation of kiwi out of the reserve. But it has been slowly increasing ever since (despite more translocation each year). Our volunteers monitor 11 male kiwi through the breeding season, with regular checks being undertaken from August-March/April to check these guys for any breeding activity. Some of the birds are already busy nesting with 5 of our monitored males already incubating.

Biosecurity & Halo

The Trust has recently sourced an audit of our current Halo project via TRC to assess the effectiveness of current trapping and outcomes. This has brought forward revisions to the Halo and grant support from the TOI foundation for these improvements, including additional labour. The revision also helped bring about Rotokare's engagement with STDC "Mayor's Task Force", which has allowed us to hire Killian on a fixed-term basis for help with both Sanctuary and Halo tasks. The Halo Project and its exciting future aren't possible without our volunteers and the support of local landowners.

Halo Catches June-August 2023

The Halo is a 4,500ha intensively-trapped buffer zone extending around and beyond Rotokare



Latest News

Staff change over



Over August & September we welcomed two new staff members to our team, Penelope and Killian, and said goodbye to Sophie (Environmental Educator) and Bradley (General Manager).

Penelope is the new Environmental Educator, taking over from Sophie, who is off to start her family. Killian joins us for a fixed-term with support from STDC Mayors Task Force and will assist with tasks around the sanctuary and halo.



With us for a short (but great!) time, Bradley moves on as Sanctuary Manager for work in Wellington - We wish him and Nicola all the best.



Night Tour Critters



Forest geckos, wētā, snails - some of the many cool creatures found in the ngahere at night.

A huge thank you to TET for their grant support to purchase warm, dry jackets for visiting tamariki.



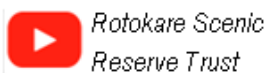
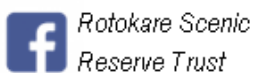
Coming Up @ Rotokare

Ambassador Open Day 12th November

Our team of Senior Ambassadors have decided to host a Rotokare Open Day filled with games, learning, and a sausage sizzle.



Bring the family and support our next generation of conservationists as they share their passion and knowledge!



WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Full Sanctuary Tracking Card Run

Join us for our routine tracking card run! We'll begin putting cards out from our Sunday working bee on October 8th, with cards being collected from the following Sunday working bee on October 15th.



With 1500 cards to deploy over 42km of trails, we're grateful for any help that can be offered. Training will be given on the day as required



Rotokare Wish List

The items on this list will help staff and volunteers with their tasks—we welcome donations and contributions towards sourcing:

- Dewalt 18V Linetrimmer (w/ battery)
- Bush crampons for casual volunteer use
- 100L No.8 brand (Mitre 10) storage bins - black & yellow

Rotokare works hard to deliver significant conservation and community outcomes. If you'd like to help us please lend us a hand by:

- *Contributing wish list items*
- *Donating towards current projects*
- *Volunteering at our Sunday working bees (9am—12pm, with free lunch!)*
- *Becoming "Friends of the Lake" (FOL) with a \$30-\$50 annual donation*

ROKOKARE CALENDAR CALL

Share with us your favourite photos from Rotokare Reserve and have them featured in our 2024 calendar



DEADLINE
SEPT. 30TH

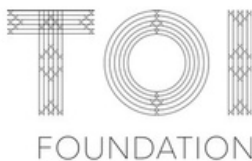
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Department of Conservation
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Te Kauhāhira o Taranaki ki Te Tonga
South Taranaki District Council



North Taranaki



Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga