



February 2013

FRIENDS OF MANA ISLAND INC

FOMI Newsletter 50

P O Box 54101, Mana, Porirua, 5247

Special points of interest:

- Editorial
- Fairy Prion Project
- Whitaker Skink
- Restoration Progress
- AGM 20 March @ Mana Cruising Club
- Colin Miskelly guest speaker
- Committee

President's Editorial

Hi

What a fantastic Summer we are having, in between the not so fantastic days. Great for us on the mainland, but not so great for our Island which needs a bit of rain now and again to keep the ponds wet, the trees growing and the fire risk down. The concrete Gannet relocation has been completed and other projects continue on, the focus of attention is now on what next?

To this end we have met with DoC and discussed the work opportunities moving forward. The department, of course, continue to have their budget reduced and their workload increased, so they are looking to reduce costs as well as work smarter. The current review of their structure should be in draft form in March with implementation due in July. In the meantime, of course, the trees and grass grows, the predators breed, but not on Mana Island, as hopefully so do the endangered species, of which Mana abounds. The Wellington Conservancy have made some changes and Mana Island has a new Ranger, Jeff Hall, and the transport arrangements have been combined with those for Kapiti and based out of Mana Marina.

The work for staff has been prioritised and DoC are evaluating the setting up a list of tasks and schedule of work which volunteers, who have the necessary skills and knowledge, could carry out. A good example of what can be achieved is the Whitakers Skink Group, who are now regularly monitoring the Pukerua Bay area for predators and animals. We are looking forward to a greater participation in the DoC work load in the spirit of our partnership.

Our projects on biodiversity and the Wetland area have been endorsed by DoC and will continue this year, both of which will generate a substantial amount of volunteer effort once the strategy and planning has been finalised, and could span a number of years.

Of particular excitement to us is that we have secured a sponsor for another release of burrowing seabirds, the Fairy Prion, and this project is scheduled to run over the next 4 years. Colin Miskelly, now the Curator Terrestrial Vertebrates at Te Papa and Helen Gummer put together a strong case for another release of 200 birds. This will mean that over the next two years the preparation work including new burrows will provide volunteer work opportunities followed by a gathering and feeding period for the following two years. We will have to shake the penguins out of our caravan before all that happens.

So we look forward to a busy few years and plenty of work opportunities.

I look forward to seeing you all at our Annual General meeting on March 20.

Cheers

Brian Paget,
President



Fairy Prion Project 2013-2016

Planning has commenced on a further release of 200 Fairy Prion on Mana Island thanks to a partnership with the Wellington based firm, OMV New Zealand Limited. OMV New Zealand funds a number of environmental and health related projects in the Taranaki and Wellington region as part of their corporate social responsibility programme. Colin Miskelly, now the Curator Terrestrial Vertebrates at Te Papa, has championed this project together with Helen Gummer as a follow on from the 2002-2004 release.

An extract from Colin's case study:

"Key findings of the project were that all 240 translocated chicks fledged in good condition, and 44 were recovered as adults - 19 on Mana Island and 25 on Takapourewa. There was a clear pattern of a higher proportion of birds recruiting to Mana island from each successive year of transfers: 2.5% of 2002 chicks, 5.0% of 2003 chicks, 13% of 2004 chicks. We interpreted this as being due to birds from later cohorts returning to Mana and staying longer (and therefore being detected) due to the presence of other birds from earlier cohorts providing an anchor. We therefore expect that, as long as the small colony on Mana Island persists for a few more years, birds transferred in 2015-16 would have a high proportion recruit to Mana Island. If we move a total of 200 chicks in those 2 years, we expect that at least 26 would return to Mana Island."

The initial work for the next 2 years will entail the planning of the release, the preparation of the translocation application, the securing of approval and support from DOC and tangata whenua, site preparation and replacing the the original artificial burrows with the style of burrows used for the fluttering shearwaters.



Whitaker Skinks at Pukerua Bay

Dale Shirliff reports that 16 Friends of Mana Island volunteers have now been trained to service the mustelid traps at Pukerua Bay Scientific Reserve. The traps are in two lines, one along the beach front, the second along the bluff tops behind. Two groups will service each trap line, one at the beginning of each month, the second mid-month. Groups will work independently, checking traps, removing 'kills', re-baiting traps and recording details. Thanks to Olaf and Gill for providing a pick up/drop off point at the Bay for trapping kits and baits.

Kills so far have been – 19 January, Beach line: 1 weasel, 1 rat, 2 stoats: 2 February, Bluff line: 1 weasel, 2 rabbits, 1 hedgehog.

Volunteers have also been responsible for installing more pitfall traps (the ones which catch the Whitaker skinks). Jacque (our contractor) has just over 1 month monitoring the pitfalls left. Thanks to John and Barbara for agreeing to install the final lot of pitfall traps in a new area. Since a Whitaker's range is small it is hoped to lead to some new catches so we can increase the numbers we currently hold in captivity.



Island Restoration

By Jason Christensen



I had the privilege of going back to Mana Island for a few day's in December 2012. It had been four years since my last visit. This visit was to help DoC and FOMI with the Floral Diversity project for Project Coordinator Linda Kerkmeester.

This is a project that has been going on for over 27 years since Lands and Survey planted the first of the 500,000+ plants. This has changed the Islands landscape from a Farm, back to the start of a coastal forested landscape.

This project has been to the Credit of the thousands of Volunteers over the years that have helped Lands & Survey and now DoC to complete the vision of the Landscape Architect of both Department's and their Island staff to implement the plan.

I feel that the restoration has moved onto the next stage from human restoration, to more, nature taking over.

Just to give you a few examples of how well the restoration is going. I saw many Rata trees flowering all over the place. Kohe kohe (*some over 2m tall*) & Milk tree (*threatened plant*) is naturally germinating in the understory (*some of these are Mainland collected seeds*). Planted Nikau are doing well. The largest Kahikatea is over 200mm across and flowering. Broadleaf have been flowering and seeding for about eight years. Lance wood and Titoki some over 4m tall.

That deep thick sward or grass is now being suppressed with the thousands of plants and in many places it is now replaced with a blanket of seedlings. Most of the public tracks now have shelter from the vegetation in many parts. From the planted edges there is also natural vegetation creeping into the remaining grasslands (*for good or bad*).

Since the last stock removed (*1986*) the island has had the biggest face lift in its life time since the de forestation started! The tide has now turned on that and is fast returning to a natural forested Island again.

Attached are a couple of the photo points to show how the Island is changing.



Photo taken at the landing in 1986



2012



Photo is taken in 1986 at the top of the Central Track overlooking Weta Valley –2012



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is given to members that the AGM of The Friends of Mana Island Inc. will be held
at the **Mana Cruising Club**, Ngatitōa Domain

7:30 PM, 20 March 2013

The purpose of the meeting is to present the Annual Report and Statement of Accounts and to elect the Officers and Committee Members for the 2013 year.

And if seen fit
To amend the Rules as follows:

Friends of Mana Island Incorporated
("the Society")

Resolution pursuant to Rule 19 of the society rules passed at an Annual
General Meeting of the Society

Background

- A The proposal is that the Society resolves to amend its rules in accordance with Rule 19 to replace the need for an audit and an auditor, with a review by a chartered accountant.

Resolved that:

- 1 Rule 7 paragraph a) be replaced with the following paragraph:
"a) The Treasurer shall present the following to the Annual General Meeting:
 - (i) a financial statement showing all the receipts and expenditure of the Society since the preceding statement and a general statement of the funds and effects and liabilities and assets of the Society; and
 - (ii) a report on the source and use of the funds for the same period.

Every such statement shall be signed by the President and the Treasurer and shall have been reviewed by a chartered accountant in accordance with Rule 14 paragraph a) of these rules."

- 2 Rule 7 paragraph f) be replaced with the following paragraph:
"f) "The election of an honorary solicitor."

- 3 Rule 14 paragraph a) be replaced with the following paragraph:
"a) The accounts of the Society shall be annually reviewed by a chartered accountant in accordance with the NZ Institute of Chartered Accountants RS-1 Statement of Review Engagement Standards dated 08/89 as amended 02/03 and any changes to, or replacements of, the statement authorised by the Institute."

The speaker will be Colin Miskelly, Curator Terrestrial Vertebrates, Te Papa, who will talk about his favourite subject and passion, "A History of Bird Translocations in New Zealand".

Your Committee for the 2012 year was:

Brian Paget, President; Jason Christensen Vice President; Irene Swadling, Secretary; Ian Hoare Treasurer and a Committee of Brian Bell, Linda Kerkmeester, Dale Shirliff, Rob Stone or his representative (DoC Rep), Reina Solomon, (IWI representative).

To contact any of the above email them at contactus@manaisland.org.nz

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