

Pigeon post – February 2014

It's hard to imagine we are already most of the way through our second summer on the island as resident rangers. I say Rangers plural as Finn our five year old has designated himself the islands 'Gecko Ranger', an important role indeed!. While the weather has dictated it to be not the greatest of summers for boating, our other native islanders have made the most of it.

Our Takahe appear to be having a better season than last, with at last count five chicks all looking good stepping out with mum and dad on the hill. One pair have gone the extra mile this year and raised two chicks together.



The 3 resident pairs of shore plover have all had nests this season, with varied success. They have produced 3 chicks, who are all busy fledging and finding their way at the moment. Our Shore Plover banding expert Helen Gummer has been recently to wrap the colour band combo's on their legs so we can tell who's who. Fingers crossed these guys stick around to help re-establish this population.

The Kiwi Conservation Club kids were across recently, not only to enjoy the island but also help with some important tasks. As part of the islands bio-security rodent surveillance, inked tracking cards baited with peanut butter are laid out in a network of tunnels. They are left out for a few nights to pick up any rodents that may (or as is preferred – may **not**) be present. The kids and parents were on hand to help me pull some of these cards in. Thankfully no mouse or rat tracks were found, but the kids enjoyed seeing and learning to identify the Gecko, Skink and Giant Weta tracks left on the cards.

The Pateke (Brown Teal) have appreciated a wetter summer this year, with the wetland ponds retaining more water .



The weather over the Festive season ensured we had a pretty quiet time with few visitors to the island. It has since been improving with a few more of you coming across, lets hope it lasts – The Black Caps had a good Indian summer, no reason why we shouldn't too eh!!

Ka Kite,

The Islanders