



Ring of steel - Ferret trapping

Over the past few months a handful of hardy volunteers have been deploying DOC 250 ferret traps around the perimeter of Otanewainuku. The whole of the western perimeter has seen traps installed that are now being regularly checked and re-baited by volunteers. The northern stretch of the eastern edge is also up and running. The rest of the eastern edge is a work in progress, with tracks to be marked and traps to be installed. Oh, and volunteers to check and bait them will be needed!

Once complete the traps will comprise the 'ring of steel' to keep ferrets at bay (173 traps in total). Ferrets pose a major threat to kiwi, they can even kill strong healthy adult birds. They generally live in more open pasture/farm areas and can forage into the bush (and into kiwi habitat) from there.

Since deployment we have had a number of ferrets caught, John Bambury and his young son Noah who patrol the northernmost traps along the western edge had a haul of eight ferrets out of their eighteen traps during one of their visits earlier in the year. The next job is to install a network of DOC 200 traps into the recently established 'expansion zone', and to find more volunteers to regularly check and bait them.

If you're interested in becoming involved in the trap roll-out and/or would like to take on a regular trap line contact Chris Pronk:
m. 0204 116 2959 **e.** pronky55@hotmail.com



Photo: Sheryl Petersen

Checking Myfie's transmitter:
he is well over us interfering in his sleep



Photo: Bruce Fraser

Bryan Everitt briefing volunteer newcomers at a workday



Photo: Bruce Fraser

Chris Pronk checking our trapping lines at a workday

Annual Public Meeting

When: 7pm - Thursday 1 August
8.30pm Supper

Where: Toi Ohomai, in H110 lecture room (next to the Atrium),
70 Windermere Drive, Poike

All welcome - gold coin donation

Speaker: Sarah Beadle

Sarah is a principal ecologist, botanist, and CEO at Wildland Consultants. Sarah has been a practising ecologist for almost 40 years. In 1985 she undertook a vegetation survey and assessment of the biological conservation values of Otawa-Ōtanewainuku. In 1994 she surveyed the Ōtanewainuku Ecological District for the Protected Natural Areas Programme (PNAP) for DOC. Sarah has a wealth of information to share with us. We encourage you to join us.

Find us on social media:



/otanewainukukiwitrust



/otanewainuku

Rongoa Māori

If you haven't heard the recent Radio NZ interview with our local rongoa Māori expert, this is a treat. Te Ahi Kaa's Jerome Cvitanovich talks to Pa Rob McGowan – a Pākehā skilled in traditional Māori medicine. You can download a podcast here: www.radionz.co.nz/national/programmes/eahikaa/audio/201792503/rob-mcgowan-rongoa-practitioner

Poroporo

Do you know your bush plants?

Recently a vigilant track user pulled out a bunch of poroporo up at the forest, no doubt thinking it was an unwanted invader. It's easy to think this plant is an invasive weed, but it's actually native and important for both rongoa Māori and for our fruit-eating birds. Almost all parts are toxic to humans, cattle and sheep due to steroidal alkaloids, glucocides and solasodine alkaloids. It is found in Australia, China and Russia.

It is found usually in disturbed habitats, shrublands, gullies, riversides, forested margins and in reverting pasture. It often appears following fires.

Curious facts:

Poroporo has been commercially cultivated in Taranaki and the former Soviet Union for the production of steroid hormones for birth control and relieving rheumatoid arthritis.

The unripe, green fruit, as well as the leaves, are poisonous. With great care the fruit can be eaten when ripe, being orange and with bursting skin. The fruit was used for making jam by early European colonists and was also used to treat skin problems. The juice was used as a sizing on woodwork and kōauau (flutes) were made from hollowed out stems of poroporo.



Poroporo leaves, flowers and fruit

Photo: Bruce Fraser

Photos - bottom: Phil Bendle

Kiwi diaries – Autumn

Saturday. *Checking out weird bearings on the youngsters. They were back where they have been regularly hanging out but I can't discount the bearings as have been proved incorrect many times when I've said "Nah, can't be right"*

Thorne has come well down toward the Whataroa. Great as he was looking like going south a few days back. We heard chopping noises. I thought it sounded like someone banging the [life] out of a bait box, but 150m along was a tree chopped down. No sign of the person. A little further along I picked up an expensive bush knife. (Googled it, he's going to be [gutted] he dropped it). The tree looked to be chopped by a big axe. Bizzare that someone would carry an axe in that far. It's a long way from public access but not that far from Seales Rd.

Sunday. *Set out after Izzy, Matawai and Kaitoro for band checks. Had all three on similar bearings, how easy could that be? Picked on Matawai first as she was loudest. Down the side of the spur, across a small gully and creek and up the other side. She was an easy dig out. Great chubby kiwi 2560g.*

A bit of a backtrack to the opposite ridge and on to the next loudest. Kaitoro. Big mistake, I should have checked the map, loud meant high, not close.

After traipsing, sliding, fighting my way over several creek guts, stumbled on another great waterfall and Izzy's last dug out burrow (didn't have fond memories of getting there last time either) and was stuck 10m above the Whataroa, cliff face and kiwi below me. Was a little over kiwi tracking by then. Would have been hideous to backtrack so sidled very slowly and extremely carefully downstream until an opportunity presented to bum-slide down to the river. Did a beep test and sure enough Kaitoro is up on the cliff. Walking up river to spur two was by far the easiest way home. Dropped my pack 1/2 way to take photos and there on the river bank, taunting me, is a fresh kiwi poo. They sure get around.

Up spur two, spotted several probe holes, got a beep on Izzy somewhere over where I'd come from and Smokey below his favorite waterfall. I chose the harder way home thinking if Izzy showed up I'd go after her, and wasn't at all disappointed when she didn't. Another kiwi poo 1/2 way up that line. It could be any one of five birds. I'm growing a picture of them covering way more area than I'd given them credit for.

One out of three is better than none. This is going to be a real hard work area for ONE (Operation Nest Egg) if the girls stay put.

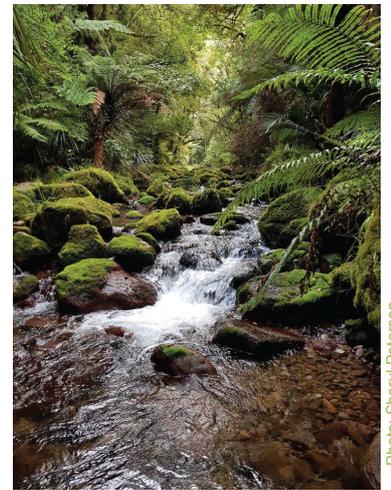
Sheryl Petersen | Ōtanewainuku kiwi tracker

Visitors comments

Thanks to those of you who have given us feedback on our Facebook page: "Awesome treasure and a real treat to experience NZ nature the way it was!" "Just took the kids up today - such a cool walk and place to be right on our back doorstep!" "Lovely, peaceful place for a walk. Both the summit walk and the waterfall walks are worth doing. The forest is full of bird song."



Thankfully not a beaver!



Whataroa stream

Photo: Sheryl Petersen

Photo: Sheryl Petersen

Volunteer profile | Astrid Eliane Paez Herrera

If you've attended one of our working bees this year, you may have met Astrid – she's the one doing the cooking and food and drink preparation.

Since moving to New Zealand from Mexico in late 2018 after meeting her kiwi partner, Astrid's been looking for a way of giving back to the community and her interests in cooking, nature and conservation made her the ideal person to fill this volunteer role.

Late last year, she started checking out volunteer organisations and came across Ōtanewainuku Kiwi Trust through the great work done by Volunteering Bay of Plenty. The forest and the kiwi connection further sparked her interest and soon she was on the bbq and preparing the drinks for the volunteers working in the bush.

The job's easier than she expected with Peter Crane bringing along everything she needs. Astrid thinks that we need more variety, particularly for the non meat eaters. She loves meeting new people though and has found volunteering to be a great way of integrating into the community.

Astrid's waiting for a work visa to be authorised but knows from her architecture and business work back in Mexico especially with voluntary organisations that it's difficult to keep going sometimes. But she loves the forest and thinks that NZ is fortunate to have such wonderful patches of bush that have been protected like Ōtanewainuku. If you're at a working bee rock up and say hi to Astrid. She loves meeting new people and making friends.

Five Fabulous Facts

1. Ōtanewainuku Kiwi Trust was set by the Te Puke branch of Forest & Bird.
2. Over 20 kiwi are protected in the bush area at Ōtanewainuku.
3. Working bees are held every month with 20 plus attending each time.
4. Around 40 kōkako have been translocated to Ōtanewainuku.
5. There are over 200km of traplines at Ōtanewainuku.

Talks to Groups

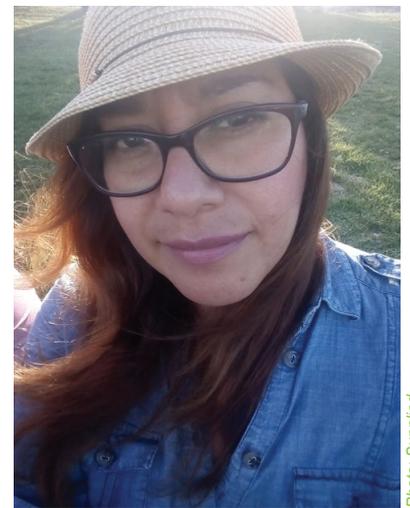
We are lucky to have knowledgeable volunteers who generously give their time to talk to groups about the work of Trust. Groups we have spoken to in the past include school groups, clubs, corporate groups, overseas visitors and tertiary students. If you would like to book in a talk, either at the forest or at another location do contact us at info@kiwitrust.org

Dave Brown met with the Project Tongariro group in mid-May to share the OKT story. The group were visiting Tauranga on a three-day weekend field trip visiting and learning from a range of environmental and conservation organisations in the BOP and Waikato regions. Project Tongariro is involved in five projects within the greater Central Plateau covering predator control, revegetation, and education. The team of volunteers, supporters, and paid staff also provide marshalling and support for the adventure events within the Tongariro National Park, and Mahi Aroha, the summer DOC programme at the Mountain.

All the group were impressed with the work undertaken by the Otanewainuku Trust and their knowledge of kiwi was taken to a higher level after meeting Dave. It was a shame that the kōkako didn't come out to play. Thanks to Dave who was an absolute star. If anyone is interested in Project Tongariro feel free to contact Lesley Mochan [e. runcrazylesley@gmail.com](mailto:e.runcrazylesley@gmail.com)

Track maintenance - call DOC

DOC maintain the tracks at the forest. You can help us to keep our tracks in top condition by calling DOC [p.07 578 7677](tel:075787677) to report any issues.



Astrid Herrera

Photo: Supplied



Hans Pendergrast talks to pupils from Te Akau Ki Papamoa

Photo: Supplied



John Rountree investigating some of the magnificent fungi while checking the trapline he and Margaret look after

Photo: Margaret Rountree



Dave Brown & Project Tongariro group

Photo: Lesley Mochan



Workday at Otanewainuku

Photo: Bruce Fraser

Thank you

We love our supporters and sponsors!

Our gratitude also to our regular sponsor a hectare donors and those of you who make an annual donation to the Trust's work. Ongoing thanks to Steve Woolly and the **Te Puke Veterinary Centre Ltd** for your support and kiwi expertise. Thanks also to **Forest & Bird, Rotary,** and the **Oropi News** for donations and to **Mark & Esme Dean** who continue to donate all the electricity charges for our volunteer lock-up. Other 'in-kind' donors are **Warrenheip Kiwi Crèche, Kiwi Encounter, Bay Conservation Alliance, Volunteer BOP** and **BECA**. Thanks to **Ocean Shores Village** and **Fairhaven School** for your donations. Big thanks to **Comvita staff** for your payroll donations. Ongoing thanks to **Pacific Collections Clothing** for your sponsorship via the sale of Wild Kiwi multiscarves and also for the additional donation of \$2000. Check out their multiscarves at wildkiwiclothing.co.nz

Thanks to Comvita for continuing to sponsor this newsletter. Once again our gratitude to the fabulous Melanie Norton for proof-reading this newsletter. We appreciate your keen eyes.

One of our supporters is **RPL Services Ltd**. RPL is a family owned and operated Transport business that has been in the Western Bay of Plenty region for over 60 years. They provide financial support through Oropi Quarries Ltd by way of mitigation for the quarry operations at Oropi. Director Tony Renner says that *"We have provided monthly contributions to the Trust for the annual winter rat and possum control operations."* Tony thinks the Trust is doing a fantastic job to eradicate the possums and keeping rodents at bay from destroying the natural wildlife.

Private or Business sponsorship

Sponsorship is always welcome! Contact Gavin Cherrie p. 07 572 5907 or email our chair: e.chair@kiwitrust.org

We have an Acorn Fund

"Any time is a great time to consider making a charitable contribution to the Acorn Foundation's Otanewainuku fund. Your gift will help ensure that the vital work in the forest continues in perpetuity. You don't need to be wealthy to make a donation; over time your gift will grow, giving back to OKT year after year." says Jess Stratton.



You can contact the Acorn Foundation:
p. 07 579 9839
w. acornfoundation.org.nz



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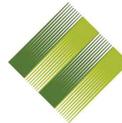
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