



Whole lotta Otter love!

On the 15th of August 2006 'Jin' the female otter arrived in Christchurch to take up her new home at Willowbank. Jin had made a name for herself by enjoying the free life in Auckland's harbour for over 3 weeks.

The day after her arrival at Willowbank she was found asleep on the floor next to the slide door connecting the two dens where her new mate to be was awaiting her. The decision was made to do an immediate introduction due to the signs shown. Within half an hour of being introduced to each other Jin & Jala were asleep in the same box and were too shy to be seen for the rest of the day! Four months on they are enjoying being a happily married couple and living the quiet life in their purpose built breeding enclosure. Jin is once again regaining confidence, as she settles in and becomes more comfortable - hopefully the result will be the pitter-patter of little paws!

Lance Dartnall



Bill our guest ex-deer culler entertained visitors at the re-opening with yarns from his time as a culler. This was a much enjoyed event by those that participated.

Muddy Stream Hut

The New Zealand Forest Service built Muddy Stream Hut as a wild animal control hut in 1965. Located on the true left bank of Muddy Stream, in the St James range, near Hanmer, it sat at an altitude of 823 m asl, and took about three hours to walk into, crossing St James station on the way.

The main users of the bivvy were remoteness seekers - trampers and hunters. In 2006 the hut was in danger of being destroyed by a landslide so the decision was made to remove and preserve it. DOC donated the hut to Willowbank Wildlife Reserve, where it was rebuilt and restored in a new home inside the deer paddock. The hut was officially re-opened during Conservation Week, August 2006.

Thanks to Department of Conservation

Summer 2006/2007 Update



DoC staff collect the egg



An Okarito chick travelling to Motuara Island - the nursery island for this species.



An Okarito kiwi returning to its burrow

Operation Nest Egg

This breeding season has been very successful with our participation in Operation Nest Egg.

We have hatched 11 Okarito (Rowi) kiwi eggs and raised 3 chicks brought in from the forest by Department of Conservation staff. The last Okarito egg has arrived for incubation, bringing our total to 15 new kiwi for this critically endangered species.

On top of this we have incubated two Haast Tokoeka eggs, these chicks have gone to their nursery island in Lake Te Anau.

Willowbank parkstaff Jeremy, Ami and Matt have all participated with DoC staff in egg collection from the Okarito Forest with some having a rougher trek through the untracked wilderness than others!

Photos courtesy of DoC

Chairman's report

The 2006 year was a very satisfactory breeding year for almost all species that the Trust has become involved with. From the Kiwi perspective it was the most successful breeding season ever, with success with Haast, Okarito and North Island Brown, and we expect to be able to add Great Spotted Kiwi to the breeding list next season. The public viewing facilities for Kiwi are approaching completion along with a new brooding room.

DoC are completing a taxa plan for Great Spotted Kiwi and when completed the anticipated breeding program will commence. Planning for the expansion of facilities into the Craigieburn Forest Park are advancing well and we expect to be operational in that program for the next breeding season. Trapping aimed at controlling predators will commence in February with the deployment of several hundred traps.

The Trust AGM in December was well supported with confirmation of future direction following a record year for gaining financial support. Finally, on behalf of all Trustees I would like to thank all the contributing trusts and organisations, staff and volunteers whose dedication and hard work has been reflected in the results recorded in our upcoming yearbook which is available by emailing - conservationtrust@willowbank.co.nz and by visiting our website.

Dick Moore

Saxon Arrives

We have received Saxon our male Great Spotted Kiwi from the North Island. We are pleased to report that Saxon and our resident female Mohua have bonded and we would hope that they will produce off-spring in the near future.



As they are the only breeding pair of Great Spots in captivity we are able to learn from them, and eventually increase our capacity in the conservation efforts for this species.



Forest Gecko



Jewelled Gecko

New Reptile Arrivals

On Saturday October 26th Rata flew to Hamilton on her way to attend the Herpetologist's Swap Day at TeKuiti....

I was met at Hamilton by Lesley Bazeley to spend two nights at her and Malcolm's place, where I saw every kind of skink and gecko I could possibly imagine. It was there, seeing their displays and hearing their enthusiasm, that I became completely hooked on skinks and geckos.

Sunday was the Herpetologist's swap day, where I was introduced as the reptile co-ordinator at Willowbank Wildlife Reserve and joined, with great interest, the Herpetologist society members to see what surplus creatures they had brought along to swap or even, to give away to new members like me.

One reason for my attendance was to bring back to Willowbank two Jewelled geckos (*Naultinus gemmeus*) and two Forest geckos (*Hoplodactylus grandulatus*). I was successful in getting these beautiful creatures back to Willowbank. After participating in this Swap Day I am now a completely addicted Herpetologist - and what better addiction could there be!

We always welcome other interested people to visit and view our reptile collection.

Rata Vivienne



Buff Weka Hatches

We have had our first Buff Weka chick hatch at Willowbank. This chick is the first in our breeding program to arrive.

We are still working towards our goal of rehabilitating these birds back into their original habitat of the East Coast of the South Island

Joey Fostering

Frauke, Ami, Anna and Eva (all wardens at the reserve) are involved in fostering three new female joeys. This involves the joeys being carried around in snug backpacks, hand feeding and night feeds!

This is a very hands on process and will continue until the baby joeys are able to fend for themselves. They will then join the other wallabys in the display paddock and have as young companions our two parent reared joeys.



NZCT website

Our web site is on-line now. Through this site there is an opportunity for memberships to be completed on-line as well as giving donations or sponsorships. Check it out at www.nzconservationtrust.org.nz Let your overseas friends and family know about our site - they may want to join or sponsor an animal or project.



Ami in the incubation room.



New kiwi viewing facility

Construction has been continuing on our new kiwi breeding viewing facility. A dedicated team of volunteers along with a number of organizations and individuals have given time, energy and funding towards this exciting project.

This facility will be completed shortly and will allow the public access to the behind-the-scenes activities of this conservation program.

Visitors are able to view the incubation and brooder room (shown to the left).

This is the only facility like this in the South Island and it will play a valuable role in raising public awareness of kiwi conservation.

Jeremy and Shaun from Willowbank diving with the fish and eels to clean the trout viewing windows. This exercise was greatly enjoyed by an audience of children who were somewhat awed they were in with the eels!



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