

THE RIMU-TALKER

*A newsletter of the Rimutaka Forest Park Charitable Trust Incorporated
March 2018*

Wellington Airport Regional Community Awards 2017

The incredible dedication of all of our volunteers and the support of our sponsors was recognised when the Rimutaka Forest Park Trust was announced as the 2017 Heritage and Environment Regional Winner at the Wellington Airport Regional Community Awards.

As the category winner of the Hutt City award, we were up against four fantastic finalists from Porirua, Kapiti, Wellington and Upper Hutt. You can see a summary of our work and the other finalists in this compilation video: [YouTubeVideo](#)



Ian Armitage, Winifred Long, Rosemary and Alan Thompson representing RFPT at the awards dinner at Te Papa on 31st October last year.
Photo by Mark Tantrum/ <http://marktantrum.com>

Operation Nest Egg (O.N.E.) Update

Four nests from the second clutch were targeted for the removal of eggs this breeding season: Tahunahuna, Lorenzo, Eddie and Marcel. The first clutch was left for the dads to incubate to hatch and all going well we have some wild hatch chicks wandering around in the park. We have not monitored wild hatch chicks this season due to a multiple of reasons, the main being resources and funds.

To their surprise, when the team went to lift Lorenzo's eggs they found one egg and one chick. The chick at 256 grams is just a wee dot. Melody says: "The other chick in the egg was vocalising and we could see the bill through the egg when candled – wow"

A total of four eggs and one chick were removed from three nests and transferred to Pukaha for incubation.



Photos by Tara Swan



Lorenzo's chick RFP47



Eddie's chick RFP49 hatching

A great start to the New Year saw the arrival of Tahunahuna's chick, hatched on the morning of 1st January weighing 342 grams. Tahunahuna, the father, came to us from Orana Park (ChCh) and Manaia, the mother, from Hokitika. We released both these birds into the Remutaka Forest Park in 2006.

Eddie's chick RFP49 hatched on 15th January at Pukaha making it a 2nd generation kiwi in the Pukaha/Rimutaka Forest Park Trust partnership.

All five chicks are now at the crèche growing big and strong. This was made possible by the funding received from Pharazyn Trust to cover the costs of incubation at Pukaha and crèche at Wairakei.

A feisty, rather noisy, and very cute brown kiwi chick was successfully transferred on 5th February from Pukaha Wildlife Centre to Wairakei Kiwi Crèche / International golf course.

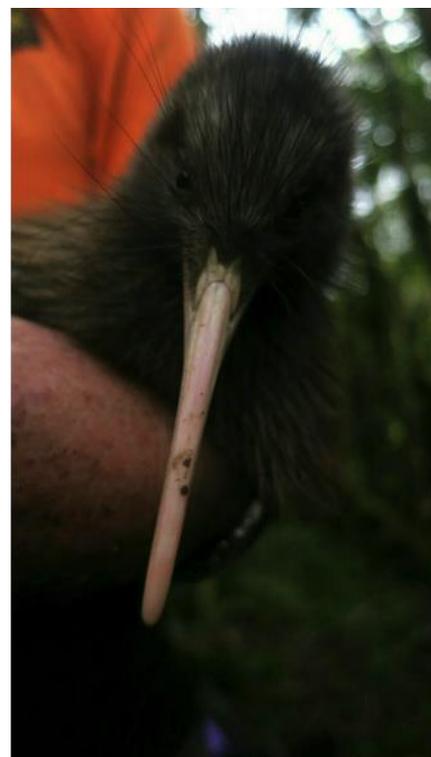
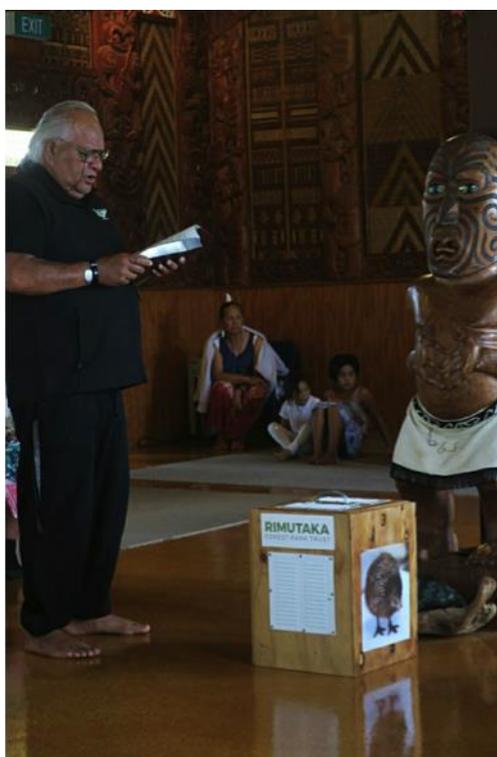
A group of school children and curious onlookers watched as the transmitter was fitted to the kiwi chick's leg. Some then followed along on golf carts to see the release in a thicket of tree ferns and scrubland.

Photo by Ian Armitage



Release of Hiwi The Kiwi

In February, Hiwi the Kiwi, sponsored by Village Accommodation, was released into the Park following a blessing at the Wainuiomata Marae.



Photos by Rebecca

Shelley, Director – Brand at Village Accommodation Group had this to say about the experience:

Well what a spectacular occasion Sunday was. We were extremely honoured to be part of such a significant and well-organised event. Not to mention the privilege of playing a small part in supporting our Kiwi population. I gained some practical insights into the incredible work you all do. Even the 'walk' into the Rimutakas to release Hiwi was no mean feat. Trying to trot along behind the super fit volunteers for 5 hours showed the dedication you put in to Kiwi – all weather and all terrain. I'm just grateful I wasn't the first to slip over and be the one to buy the beers.

Follow us on Facebook

If you use Facebook you can keep up to date with our news as it happens. Search for "Rimutaka Forest Park Trust" and hit that *like* button.

Catchpool Restoration Project

Thank you to project coordinator Peter Cooper for the recent update on the project. Peter reports that it was a quiet summer period with drought conditions the main concern. The exceptionally dry conditions in November and early December left many of our recently planted trees seriously stressed and some have died. The summer's activities included:

- Hand-watering some of the stressed recent native plantings
- Planting out some more native mistletoe
- Pricking out the kanuka seedlings and weeding last season's remaining potted plants in the nursery
- Weekly checks for signs of myrtle rust. A recent outbreak is just 9km away (as the kaka flies) in Naenae.
- The Northern rata planted in previous years are now over 2 meters in height and flowering too!



Former Chief of United States Forest Service, Dale Bosworth is in New Zealand on an official US State Department speaking tour, during which time he has visited many forestry-related organisations and research institutions. We were delighted that he came to visit us at the Catchpool to learn more about our conservation-related community volunteer efforts - and to reminisce about forestry matters with another lifetime career forester, Geoff Cameron.

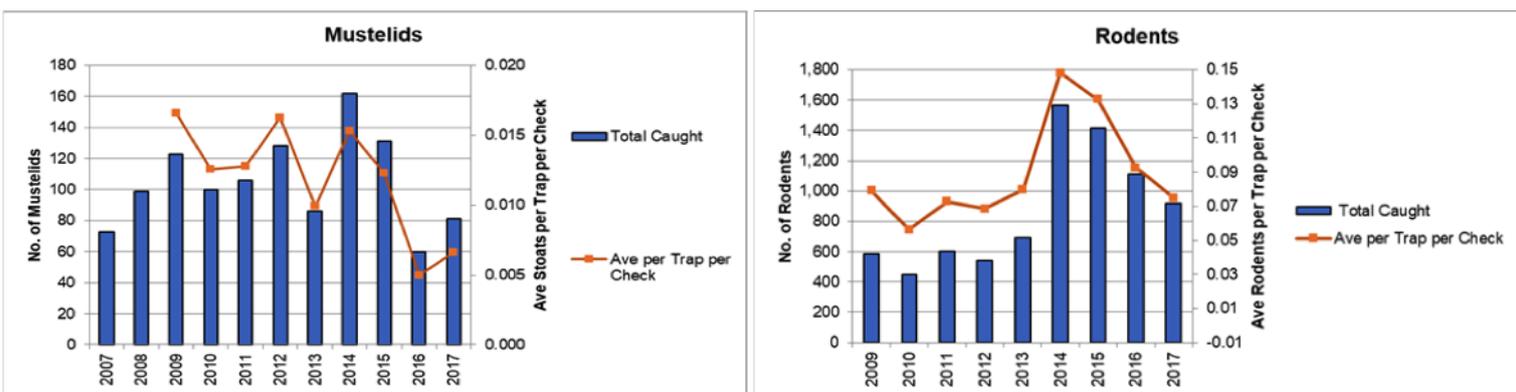
Photo by Peter Cooper

Trapping

The following graphs provided by Winifred Long illustrate the variation of the numbers of mustelids (stoats and weasels) and rodents caught each year, in total and compared with the number of times per year that the traps are checked.

We have had a few variables this year with the 1080 operation knocking back the rodents, mustelids, possums and hopefully the feral cats.

The graphs do not cover the slow increase in the catch that we are starting to experience through Jan/Feb 2018. This information will follow in the next newsletter.



Stoat Research

Thank you to all those trappers providing dead stoats. A few months ago the Trust was approached for stoat ears as part of a kiwi research programme looking at regional differences in genotypes in stoats. We were then in a position to provide 16 different tissue samples to Landcare Research in support of their research.



A24 Rat Traps

The A24s with automatic dispensers loaded with long life rat lure, installed across the kiwi zone back in October 2017 will be due to be re-baited and re-gassed in May this year. Current volunteers can email Melody bidi@xtra.co.nz if you're keen to be a part of the exercise either on your existing trap-line or keen to do other lines as well. The plan is to do it all in a day with a BBQ or breakfast beforehand. They will be baited with long life rat lure again to allow the DOC200 to be available for our friends the stoat!

Remutaka Forest Park in the News

www.stuff.co.nz/environment/99988049/kiwi-thriving-in-forest-park-just-one-hour-from-wellington-cbd

www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/news/100090292/nothing-boring-about-a-walk-to-boar-inn-to-hear-the-kiwi-calling

Restoration Day – Saturday 26th May 2018

Join other restoration volunteers for a day of talks, fieldtrips, workshops & networking. The keynote speaker is Dr Danielle Shanahan, Zealandia. For further details visit www.naturespace.org.nz/restorationday2018

What is this???



There are always interesting fungi to find in the Remutakas, all shapes, sizes and colours....

Thank you to all those like-minded people and organisations who have sponsored a trap, Kiwi or tree through the Rimutaka Forest Park Trust's sponsorship programme

