

# BIRD CALL

April 2019

Issue 46



orokonui  
ecosanctuary

## What's New at Orokonui

For more than a decade Orokonui Ecosanctuary has been fantastically well-supported by our wider community, both in Otago and beyond. From the many volunteers that contribute more than 1,000 hours of their time each month, to our generous sponsors and donors who provide vital financial contributions for our work - and all those people whose good deeds, big and small, have encouraged us over the years - we are enormously grateful for your support. Without it we couldn't achieve the fantastic conservation outcomes that we have so far!

In acknowledgement, we want to give something back to our local community this month . . . as part of the Wild Dunedin Festival, Orokonui Ecosanctuary will be holding an Open Day on Wednesday the 24th of April. Admission to the ecosanctuary will be FREE OF CHARGE, with a variety of family-friendly activities on offer: join Inspector Insector for a Bug Hunt, get to know our native species better with Takahe feeding and a Tuatara Show and Tell, or sign the little ones up for a Re-Wild Your Child kid's tour. If you're looking for something a bit more laid-back try a yoga class in the forest, or sample Horopito Café's latest new coffee - the bright and lively Raupeka - freshly roasted on site! Watch our facebook page for more details and updates . . . hope to see you there!

*Amanda Symon - General Manager*



*What a good deed! Thank you John Williams for the carefully cut and boxed kindling - fire-lighting in the Visitor Centre is now a breeze!*

## Conservation Matters



It's been a busy time in the kiwi crèche this summer. During February and March the six resident Haast Tokoeka kiwi chicks had to be caught once a week for three weeks to have disease screening conducted. On some days a team of up to seven staff and volunteers were needed to capture the birds as they can get rather evasive in the top scrub . . . The chicks were tested for the bacterial infections Salmonella and Yersinia; if they show clear results over three consecutive weeks and have good body condition, they get to leave Orokonui. Five of the six chicks 'graduated' on March 12th and were then transferred to an island on Lake Manapouri by DOC staff. It was a very busy day as another four chicks, including the smallest chick we've ever had (a mere 350 grams), arrived to the start the whole crèche process again. The new batch of chicks will stay with us until June. Orokonui has graduated around 50 chicks from the crèche since 2015 - when there's only 400 to 500 Haast Tokoeka left in the world our efforts are a significant contribution to the conservation of the species!

*Elton Smith - Conservation Manager*

*Education volunteer Lena Wellhagen was lucky enough to watch a Kiwi health check during her time at Orokonui!*

# Forest of Knowledge

The Orokonui education team is lucky enough to attract volunteers from all over the world! This summer, we've really enjoyed hosting Lena, a biology teacher from Sweden . . .

*I would like to thank Orokonui Ecosanctuary for having me as a volunteer, it was a dream come true! I have learned so much about the fantastic work that is being performed in the ecosanctuary: giving all the students access to nature, and the opportunity to realize the importance of biodiversity for the health of the planet.*

*One of my contributions to the team at Orokonui was to explore how to make the important contribution that the ecosanctuary makes to the UN Global Development Goals more easily visible for children and other visitors. This is something I am very passionate about! And we all know that the Europeans introduced a lot of invasive species to New Zealand - so I thought it would be good to do some pay back . . . I have been attacking blackberry and Spanish heath with the amazing Wednesday Weeding Team: thank you Marie, Maree, Susan, Noelene and Doug, it was great doing that with you and I learned a lot!*

*I will miss you all very much, but it's good to know that you will keep doing your good work for the future generations!*  
Lena Wellhagen - Education Team Volunteer

## Volunteers' Voices

March has been an awe-inspiring month with tonnes achieved! Firstly, volunteers took on the successful Orokonui Challenge race which saw runners traverse the northern fence line, over to Osborne, around Doctors Point and back up the Estuary and Robin Valley Tracks. Volunteers assisted in all capacities from first aid, marshals, dish washing and more. On top of our dedicated Orokonui volunteers we had assistance from the Unicrew 'Silverline Sundays' crew.

March has also seen a visit from the ASB volunteer group who helped us prune and weed 25 of our almost 200 harakeke plants in the pā! This was achieved in only 1.5 hours and shows the real impact of group volunteering. We are now looking for people interested in assisting us with hosting volunteer groups in the pā . . . If you have experience with harakeke, or gardening, and enjoy working with groups please get in touch!

Aside from volunteering 'in the field', our team enjoyed a dedicated training day with Brendan Gray, a director on our governing board, and marketing management and public relations educator. He helped us understand how best to interact with media using mock interviews which really put us on the spot!

Alice Macklow - Volunteer Coordinator



*The amazing ASB volunteers after finishing their hard work in our Pā Harakeke*

## Wishlist

A point and shoot (basic) digital camera - for volunteers and guests to use to create content for social media



Open Daily 9.30am-4.30pm for Guided Tours and Self Guided Walks  
Orokonui Ecosanctuary, 600 Blueskin Rd, Waitati, Dunedin  
Ph 03 482 1755 info@orokonui.nz [www.orokonui.nz](http://www.orokonui.nz)