

BIRD CALL

July 2019

Issue 48



oroikonui
ecosanctuary

What's New at Orokonui

Here at Orokonui we are lucky enough to have a number of corporate sponsors who support our work in a variety of different ways. In June we had some wonderful new sponsors come on board. One of these was Blackhead Quarries, who a few weeks ago provided much needed gravel to re-crown the Pökākā and Robin Valley tracks. Going forward they have also offered to supply gravel for the road encircling the ecosanctuary, providing vital access to the predator-resistant fence, and for weed and predator control. This is a massive contribution to our ongoing operations - a heartfelt thank you to Tony Hunter and his team for their amazing generosity!

Other new sponsors are Rodney and Trish Flannery, the new owners of Centre City New World. Rodney and Trish are carrying on a fabulous joint project with Orokonui that was started by the previous owner, Craig Neiper - reusable shopping bags, inspired by Orokonui Ecosanctuary! As 'plastic free July' begins you may want to consider purchasing one of the latest bags featuring a cool Takahē image designed by our own up and coming young artist, Madison Kelly! You can pick one up from Centre City or Orokonui, or order one through our online shop and we'll post it out to you. Thanks Rodney and Trish!

Amanda Symon - General Manager



The fantastic new Orokonui reusable shopping bag!

Conservation Matters

Research has always played an important role in the success of the Orokonui Ecosanctuary. Since our inception there has been a constant stream of research projects undertaken and we currently have the greatest number being conducted simultaneously. Here is a summary of what is currently going on: Jane Tansell has commenced a PhD to compare different methods of monitoring Haast tokoeka. Jane is comparing trail cameras, acoustic recorders, scent lures and dog surveys. For Orokonui we will finally get an understanding of what our kiwi population is up to! Jim Crofts-Bennett is an Ecology Masters Student looking at spider ecology and how it is impacted on by mammal control in NZ. As part of his study Jim has developed an exciting new live trap for invertebrates. Zoe Lunniss is a Botany Masters student looking at establishing the now rare mistletoe *Tupeia Antarctica* into the sanctuary and she already has seeds germinating on host plants. Dr. Angela Brandt, Ecologist/Modeler at Manaaki Whenua is looking at facilitative interactions dominant in New Zealand's unique bryoflora (liverworts and mosses). Finally, Jessica Chen is conducting a Zoology Masters project on the invertebrates within the Orokonui Ecosanctuary. It is quite possible Jessica has identified several new species of invertebrates including a radically coloured springtail!

Elton Smith - Conservation Manager



A juvenile Haast tokoeka taken by one of PHD candidates Jane Tansell's trail cameras

Forest of Knowledge

June has been a very busy month; we have worked with more than 1500 students! We have loved the mild weather, with warm days and beautiful skies above us!

We have loved hosting many new groups from the Otago Polytechnic Design school on a more regular basis. Every Thursday we have been joined by Associate Professor Caroline McCaw and her Communication Design student dream team. These talented students have been hard at work on a range of projects: creating wonderful new education resources, developing the 'brand story' for Horopito Cafe, and making an amazing interactive online game about our kākā! We have also been honoured to host Azul Carolina Duque, a student intern from Colombia, through the University of Otago Outreach Certificate programme. Azul has completed 60 hours with us and added her unique flair to every programme, incorporating her knowledge of the natural world, passion for environmental education and music. Azul says "working at the eco-sanctuary taught me so much about the importance of connecting with each other and with the land!". We wish Azul all the best with her future studies in Canada and hope she will be back before too long! If you would like more information about our outreach certificate and volunteering with the Education Dream Team please contact me on tahu@orokonui.nz

Tahu Mackenzie - Head Educator



Associate Professor Caro and members of the Communication Design Dream Team

Volunteers' Voices

May was consumed with track maintenance, or track 'May-ntenance' as I've so coined it. The operations team at Orokoni have to ensure the track system, which covers Orokoni in a grid with tracks every 50 metres, is given a once over regularly. They cut back any overgrowth and dig in new steps, and pathways as needed. This year we recruited new volunteers to assist with the keen regulars in a giant push to completion, and we are happy to say the goal of 20km has been met! Some of the new recruits are keenly staying on to assist with other operations tasks and based on the success of the singularly focused recruitment drive we will be repeating this mission again soon! The track system ensures access to all areas of Orokoni, and is regularly used for all sorts of tasks from tracking tunnels, which record the sorts of creatures that occupy the different areas, to bait stations, bird surveys and much more. Without the epic hard work of the track maintenance team we would have never been able to cover so much ground! Thanks team!

Alice Macklow - Volunteer Coordinator



Some of our hard working volunteer track-clearing team, with Ranger Kelly Gough.



Open Daily 9.30am-4.30pm for Guided Tours and Self Guided Walks
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