

**Otatara**  
Landcare Group

# PIGEON POST

*Newsletter of the  
Otatara Landcare Group*

**Issue 68 Autumn 2023**

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*The full colour version of this publication is available on [www.otataralandcare.org.nz](http://www.otataralandcare.org.nz) under 'publications'.*



**The new and striking artwork along Stead Street has been completed and blessed, and tells the story of the people who have used the estuary for hundreds of years, and of hopes for the future. Full story and photographs from page 14.**

# SERN VISITS BUSHY POINT



By **Catriona Gower**

The SERN (Southland Ecological Restoration Network) autumn field day took place at Bushy Point on Saturday April 29 in brilliant, summer levels of sunshine!

There were volunteers from groups in Bluff to central Southland, Catlins across to the Aparima and a few local Otatara residents too. It was a wonderful day of discovery for all those who attended.

Huge thanks to all those involved both in organising the event and especially to those who have taken part, and continue to be the kaitiaki of this area, taking it from sheep-grazed paddocks onto its 500 year journey of restoration to a rich kahikatea forest ecosystem that was so rashly felled in a couple of days back in the 70's.

Now it will also be interlaced with open tussock patches where people can share time watching the

clouds float by with a backdrop of tūi and kākāriki. SERN wanted to showcase what could be achieved in time alongside providing advice where lessons have been learned, and Bushy Point was a perfect example.

Barry Smith, caretaker of Bushy Point, did an awesome job with facts and figures for every topic alongside descriptions of how much sweat had been shed; in deciding to take on the site in the 90's, to worrying if anyone would turn up to plant the ready and waiting 6000 plants for the Living Legend event, to repeated planting (with different species!) on areas that no plants seem to be able to grow in and how a spike-grass covered wetland is still heaven for heaps of NZ insects, so stop sweating about it!

[Continued on next page](#)

*Below, some of the visitors from the SERN autumn field day at Bushy Point, listening to botanist Brian Rance speaking on the mix of different shrubs planted and the methods trialled at Bushy Point.*





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# BIG TREE COMPETITION

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By Chris Rance

We are running a competition to find the biggest native trees in Otatara. The correct way to measure trees is around their trunk at a height of 1.4 metres (for consistency).

To start the ball rolling I have measured two trees in our bush, a kahikatea measuring 2.8 metres in circumference and a rimu measuring 2 metres in circumference. Can you beat them? And do you have a big totara, matai, miro or rata on your property?

We also had a look in the Oreti Totara Dune forest and found some large matai and totara trees. The picture is of Brian Rance measuring a large totara in the forest.

Email a photo of you or a member of your family and the tree trunk to [rances@southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz](mailto:rances@southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz) and we will announce in the next Pigeon Post who are the winners. The prizes for the biggest rimu, totara, miro, matai, kahikatea and rata will be five native plants each from the Community Nursery.

Chris:

[www.southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz](http://www.southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz)



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## SERN visit to Bushy Point continued



Lloyd Esler described the amazing number of birds to be found here, Brian Rance explained the mix of different shrubs planted and the various methods trialled and Chris Rance gave some of the background plans and how the site provides education to the wider community with the Community Nursery and school or other group visits. There was plenty of chatter throughout the day - of ideas exchanged to take back to their sites, and many comments of people being impressed by the achievements.

There have been so many people involved over the 25 years, some were young children at the

start and have come back now with their own youngsters. Take some time yourself to wander through, help on a planting or weeding day, and if you are looking to get fit, perhaps take on a pest trap line.

The next SERN event will be in the spring. SERN is primarily a network of groups sharing information through the website:

<https://www.sern.org.nz/> Take a look, go along to a group's events, ask for help – it is there for all involved in helping wildlife to return in Southland.



# MAKING MEMORIES



By Linda

## Making, and Keeping, Memories.

Our Ofatara Community Nursery is a fantastic local asset, with benefits reaching right across Southland & beyond. I recently attended a Botanical Sketchbooking workshop held there, tutored by Jo Ogier. Look her up & get inspired. 12 keen students, 12 different ways of looking, abilities, & interests, all wishing to gain confidence we see. to better record what we gathered leaves which became beautiful, intricate rubbings.

Twig & ink drawing pens, cabbage tree leaves & lancewood stems became brushes, firewood logs inspired learning about shapes & textures.

Outside we each chose a tree to capture on paper, sitting in the breeze learning more about shapes, colour, perspective & staying focussed!

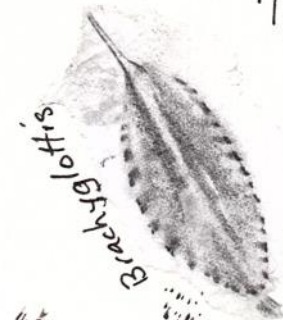
A 'show & tell' to finish up was my favourite part, not just to feel inspired

(& envious if I'm being honest) by the talent on display, but mostly to hear why each person chose that particular piece to exhibit.

We all have our own perspective, unique & true to our own self.

There is a worldwide 'Urban Sketchers' community linking people interested in recording & sharing a visual, personal memory of a particular time & place, then sharing that image with others.

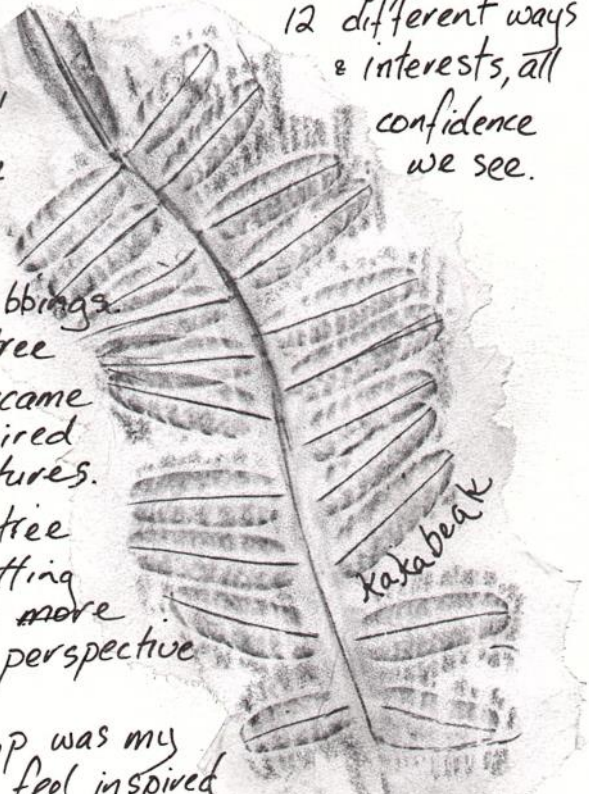
I like doing that mostly for myself, but then also find attending a group workshop highly valuable for both upskilling & being around others with a shared interest. Gaining a greater appreciation for this unique part of the world is the very best ultimate outcome. L.S. April 2023



leaf rib & ink



coprosma lucida



kaka beak



# THE CORONATION TOTARA



By Barry Smith

Ahh, what a lovely day, May and the temperature is hovering just above the 16C mark and the wind although gently drifting in from the SW is not particularly unpleasant, especially considering the several hundred mm of rain predicted for parts of the rest of the country.

Parkrun was over and done with for the week, the grocery shopping was done, so, what of the many things I should be doing, am I going to do? Actually I didn't particularly like any of the things on my (non) list.

Well, the 6th of May 2023 is a pretty famous sort of a day. There were people in many of New Zealand's towns and cities celebrating something that hasn't occurred in the last 71 odd years.... a Coronation.

Around these towns and cities there were a lot of people planting trees. So around midday I had a bit of an epiphany: Why don't we celebrate the Coronation in a similar way with the planting of a totara tree in Bushy Point?

The fact that a totara tree has great mana in its own right and would fit right into the Bushy Point planting project was a great bonus. So, at midday I sent an email out to the Otatara Landcare Group committee inviting them to come and assist.

Thinking I'd be lucky to get anyone at short notice I was pleasantly surprised when Graeme, Richard and Sue all turned up. We then toddled off into the bush, found a suitable spot and planted the totara.

Then, led by the splendid baritone voice of Enrico Caruso., I mean Graeme...we did the only



Bushy Point known rendition of 'God save the King'.

I am reasonably assured that our version will not be a great hit in the music world. In the years to come, long after our King and we ourselves have passed on, this totara tree will live on for possibly 30 to 60 further human generations.

*Above, Barry and Sue Johnson set up a GPS location in Bushy Point for the King Charles 111 coronation totara. I assume Buckingham Palace will be advised...*



# WEED WORKSHOP



By Rachel Jones

On Saturday 25th March Environment Southland Biosecurity Officers for Pest Plants, Rachel Jones and Walter Fieldes, spent the morning at the Rance's community nursery, and we had a good turnout.

The aim was to have the opportunity to engage with people who are curious about the plants that appear in their gardens and if they are pest plants, to discuss how can they control them.

There was a display including information about the pest plants that Environment Southland are working on controlling that are listed in the Southland Regional Pest Management Plan.

Having this event at the Rance's nursery was a privilege and attracted keen plant enthusiasts from a wide area, some brought a weed to be identified and left with native plants from the Rances nursery to replace the non-natives.

Thank you to Chris and Brian Rance for providing a guided tour and helping us answer questions.

During the event we had three old man beard pest plants reported and three people who took an interest in the ES Environmental Enhancement Fund opportunities.

We would love to repeat the workshop again next year.



**It's  
Fungi  
Time**

**Look out  
for  
puffballs  
the size of  
footballs!!**

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# AUTUMN AND ADMIRALS

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By Sue Johnson

Autumn is a season for reaping. I set about digging up my potato crop before the weather turned too wet. We have been digging around the edges ever since Christmas and the time had come to give the bed a good fork over to find the spuds that had been missed – quite a few! Our digging had not been systematic.

Firstly I had to clear a carpet of nasturtiums. These have made themselves at home in my veggie patch. I let them go in places where they are not doing any harm. Their strong fragrance is quite a good insect repellent and I am sure it keeps the beetles away. These are the click beetles that lay their eggs in the soil, which hatch into wire worms. These burrow into the young spuds and also into carrots. It is very disappointing to cut into potatoes or carrots and find an unwelcome tenant!

Borage also grows amongst the potatoes. Borage is much loved by bees, which are always welcome in any garden. Borage tends to carry on flowering late in the season, providing pollen for hungry bees. Alyssum is another flowering plant growing in the veggie patch. It is low-growing and does not encroach on the veggies and is another favourite with the bees. I love sharing my garden with creatures.

I also have a patch of nettles (yes, there is some protest about this from a certain somebody!) The nettle is the host plant for the Admiral butterfly. I would love to see more of these beautiful native butterflies around, so if you have an area where there is not much foot traffic, do let the odd nettle grow.

Some bees can be a bit of a nuisance. You may have noticed the flowers on your broad beans falling before pollination – this is caused by a bee that steals the nectar. It has learned to make a hole at the base of the flower and push its proboscis in to get the nectar, resulting in the flowers wilting. This means the bee is not doing its job of crawling down the flower tube and past the



*Nettles host Red Admiral caterpillars and provide protection from predators.*

pollen. It is taking a short cut! Broad beans are mostly self-pollinating so it is not such a crime, but just interesting to see how nature adapts.

I have had a most successful tomato and courgette season too. One of the elements influencing this is companion planting. Last year the tunnel house was invaded by aphids – all over the courgettes, pumpkins and tomatoes. This year I planted a perennial marigold (*Tagetes lemonii*) right by the door of the tunnel house. It is big and I had to sacrifice a 'food growing' spot, but it has been so worthwhile as it deters aphids.

Each time I go out in and out of the door I brush past it. The smell from the leaves fills the tunnel house. It grows very easily from cuttings. I have a large plant in my glass house too. It almost reaches the roof! I have tried growing peppers this year, something I have avoided in the past as they are so prone to insect attack. I planted it right next to the marigold. I put neem granules in the soil as well, and I have delicious juicy red peppers and no aphids!

If you are thinking of growing some winter veggies, brassicas and broad beans can still be planted, the sooner the better. Soil temperatures are still quite warm and you should get some good growth before it gets really cold. Veggies will get even more expensive in winter, so give it a go.



# WHAT SEEDLING IS THAT?



by Chris Rance

At the nursery or on field inspections we are often asked “what is that seedling”? “Is it a native”? or “Does it belong here”?

It is often a matter of practice to identify seedlings – here are a few pointers (and a few photographs). For more photos see <https://www.southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz/news-and-events/what-seedling-is-that/>

Many seedlings look just like a miniature version of the adult plant – eg Pittosporum, wineberry, broadleaf. If you know what the adult leaf looks like, the seedling will look very similar.

Often there is confusion between seedlings of black mapou, (*Pittosporum tenuifolium*), red mapou (*Myrsine australis*) and pepperwood (*Pseudowintera colorata*) as they can all look quite similar but with practice you will be able to tell them apart.

A few look a bit more cryptic and challenging because they change their leaf shape from a seedling to an adult plant – examples are native clematis, lancewood and pokaka.

*Below, the seedling of the wineberry, makomako, *Aristotelia serratus*.*



The big tree seedlings – totara, miro, matai and kahikatea - can look quite similar to each other when young and rimu can take a bit of identifying (but it is also so rare to see it). Look at the photos to familiarise yourself with the differences.

We enjoy exploring bush, so if you are in doubt and would like some help just email [rances@southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz](mailto:rances@southlandcommunitynursery.org.nz) and we will find the time to come around to your bush and help with identification.

*Below, the seedling of the matai, *Prumnopitys taxifolia*.*





## What seedling is that? continued



Below left, the seedling of the kahikatea, *Dacrycarpus dacrydioides*; below right, totara, *Podocarpus totara*.

Bottom left, miro, *Prumnopitys ferruginea*; bottom right, *Pittosporum tenuifolium*, kohuhu, black mapou.







By Kathy Morrison

The lovely warm weather has been great for us but not so good for seabirds though. We have had a lot of calls about petrels, shags, blue penguins and gulls on Oreti beach this year. In most cases they seem uninjured but unmoving which may indicate that they are exhausted, dehydrated and/or starving.

A wildlife vet in Canterbury believes it is likely that the warmer sea temperatures are driving fish and krill deeper than these birds are used to feeding.

Clearly, as we all know, it is not safe to leave the birds out on the beach for too long with dogs and vehicles to contend with.

At the moment there is really no system in place to care for these seabirds and people are being advised to lift them up into the sandhills away from the aforementioned hazards only to find that they are being attacked by hawks and the feral cats we have seen hunting in these area. And neither solution deals with the problems they may be having of dehydration and starvation.

Bush Haven is not set up or licensed to deal with sea birds, which is not to say that we don't care about them. We do. And we are keen to take

a part in setting up some sort of facility in the near future with other parties to provide rehabilitation for seabirds. DOC has the mandate to care for these birds but maybe not the facilities or funding. But still do ring their Helpline 0800 362 468 when you come across seabirds in difficulties.

Bush Haven is set up to care for kereru, tuis, bellbirds, wax eyes, owls and other small native birds. We are more than happy to be approached for advice on other birds as well. Although we do not have the facilities we are aware of different people with particular abilities in caring for baby birds, kahu hawks etc.

Many more and less subtle changes are occurring as most people note that local kereru numbers are way down although for a few others they have increased.

Walking around the Daffodil Bay track we have seen no sign of kereru feeding on the poroporo berries this year or flying across the hectares of native bush. Tui and other smaller birds like sparrows and thrushes are also reported to be conspicuous by their absence.

Which brings me to the fact that last year we did not put out a reminder in time for people to prevent kereru in particular from striking windows as they begin displaying and courting mid August. We were all caught out and sadly a Spring mayhem of injured kereru occurred.

We are so grateful to Lisa Stuart and others at Vet South for the often emergency

Conti

*Left, Tiaki the kereru finally flies free after three months in care at Bush Haven.*

*Maurice Rodway wrote on the topic of bird strikes in the Spring 2022 issue of Pigeon Post, which can be accessed via the website:*

*[www.otataralandcare.org.nz](http://www.otataralandcare.org.nz) under 'publications'.*







work they do with the kereru at very short notice. In fact they are the ambulance and front line carers, we are the nursing staff following the treatment plans.

Let's pull out the stops this year and be prepared by not cleaning the windows and hanging dreamcatchers and other deterrents in them to counter the reflections that encourage birds to think they can fly right on through.

In the past the windows broke on impact but double glazing breaks the birds. It is heartbreaking to have birds recovering slowly in cages when they long to be out doing their own thing especially at such an important time of the year.

This is the Pigeon Post edition leading into the danger time for the birds. And even though this is really early please cut out the Alert on the right and stick it on your fridge or somewhere prominent so that at least Otatara birds have a better chance of being injury-free in 2023.

## **Kereru Alert**

***August - March each Year***

**If you love the birdlife in Southland enough to bring them for help when they are injured, love them even more and please take precautions to prevent them hitting your windows**

**Bush Haven is only the ambulance at the bottom of the cliff.**

**You can be the fence at the top.**

## **Update on recycling—a chat with Hamish McMurdo**

National media recently ran a story on recyclers pulling back from processing soft plastics and soft plastics collection bins being removed from participating supermarkets.

This was concerning, so I called Hamish McMurdo, general manager of Recycle South, to clarify the issue.

Hamish confirms they are still processing soft plastics, which was good news. This includes the likes of bread bags and all soft plastic bags.

It was a good opportunity to remind myself of what Recycle South will accept, and it is a lot!

Among the misconceptions he clarified is that most of the recycling collected goes to landfill. This is not true, he said. "Anything that can be recycled genuinely does get recycled, at this stage mostly overseas, which is the case with almost all New Zealand recycling".

However, he said Recycle South is developing a further processing plant in Southland that will enable most plastics to be turned into resin for

use in further types of products. "In the meantime, we have markets overseas for most items of recycled plastics and I can guarantee that they definitely go to factories overseas and get recycled".

People sometimes say that glass is not being recycled, and I asked Hamish about this. That is also not true, he said. McGregor Concrete takes glass and crushes it for aggregate in roading, even the airport runway. Glass is also being used in base courses below concrete pads in buildings and when installing drainage in heavy clay, placing crushed glass around the pipeworks, to help with drainage.

Hamish asked that we take lids off plastic and glass containers, but include them in our recycling. Please do not squash plastic bottles and cans, and mostly importantly, rinse them all out!

For more information, go to the Recycle South website and also to their facebook page where there are also some really interesting podcasts.



# HOW TO DOUBLE BIRD LIFE



**By Mike Saunders**

When we moved to Otatara 15 years ago one of the attractions was being able to listen to the birds singing rather than hearing traffic.

In our home there were a few mice which we trapped and then after seeking help from Russell Evans we set up traps around our boundary. He said the baits were an attractant so you don't want to attract them into your home, rather away from it.

It was good sound advice as we have not had a mouse in the home since. We added in a possum trap, caught a few initially and then only one in the past 10 years.

These two small steps, trapping mice, rats and

possums, has doubled the bird life around our place with bell birds, tuis, pigeons, wax eyes and fantails thriving without the pests. We also have skinks and stick insects doing well.

In addition we have replaced gum, pine, poplar and silver birch trees with natives, especially fuchsias and kowhai trees. When the kowhai trees are in full flower we can have up to 20 tuis feeding in them. The pigeons love sitting in them dining on the leaves.

Another comment I think I read in the Pigeon Post and thought was fantastic advice was from Brian Rance calling fuchsias 'bird feeders'.

Personally I would encourage every household in Otatara to trap rodents so that over time and as a team we could make Otatara rodent-free.



*Left, Mike's bird feeder tree!*

*Below, a skink in Mike's garden, thanks to rodent trapping.*



## **Pestbusting advice and supplies**

**For advice on baits and traps for rodents, and to resupply, please get in touch with Dallas Bradley, from Otatara Pestbusters, on 021 784 962, 03 213 0234, email to [amberg2@gmail.com](mailto:amberg2@gmail.com) or call in at 120 Oreti Road, Otatara**



# CITIZEN SCIENTISTS



## Year Six at Otatara School

Year 6 students at Otatara School recently took part in the school's annual Litter Intelligence Survey as part of their citizen science project.

Students visited the Noki Kaik beach area at Sandy Point to collect litter from a selected area as part of a National Project through Sustainable Coastlines <https://sustainablecoastlines.org/about/our-programmes/litter-intelligence/>

Once collected, the litter was categorised and this data contributed to a national database. Science learning is integrated into the school's classroom programmes in a myriad of ways - part of the play invitations and programmes in junior classes, linked to literacy learning through reading and writing, connected to seasonal events such as the current autumn related learning as well as focused areas of inquiry or investigation.

All of this is also supplemented with the school's weekly visits to the adjoining Otatara Scenic Reserve for ongoing learning about Otatara's natural environment.





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# THE STEAD STREET ART

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## Celebrating the journey

**The story behind ‘Te Ara Tūpuna’, ‘the way of the ancestors’, as told by the artworks along the new Stead Street stopbank and at the airport.**

The Waihōpai Rūnaka-led mahi toi (work of art) elements have now been installed along the Stead Street stopbank (Kōreti estuary) and Airport Avenue (leading to the airport). These works were part of wider projects for climate change resilience and protecting travel connection between the airport and Waihōpai/Invercargill city. They were funded by MBIE Kānoa and the Invercargill City Council, and were delivered by the Runaka’s partner organisation, the Invercargill City Council.

Kaupapa for the mahi toi development was defined and guided by Waihōpai Rūnaka’s Narratives Committee, with James York as the lead artist. Future integrated works will occur with the delivery of the Stead St Pump Station (‘Waimātaitai’) by Environment Southland.

Thank you to the Waihōpai Rūnaka for the information for this story on the artworks.

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### The waka tīwai curved ends

The Narratives Committee provided kōrero around the waka tīwai kaupapa for the stopbank wall. This brings to mind the numerous journeys across this stretch of water from the waka tauraka (landing place) near Waihōpai/Invercargill city across to the settlements of Oue and Ōmāui on the opposite side and around the coast.

Waka tīwai were for quick and easy transport of people and items across the calmer waters of the estuary. The sculpted upturned curved ends give the stopbank wall a waka appearance and seem to make the wall float. Coupled with a major work at the intersection with Airport Avenue, and hoe (paddle posts), and detailing along the length, this one kilometre piece of climate change infrastructure is transformed into something very special – mahi toi that speaks to mana whenua associations with the Kōreti estuary over generations.



## **Kā Matau o Te Maramataka (the seasonal calendar)**

The Kōreti is also a circulation route and gateway to the upper reaches of the catchment for many aquatic species that transition from open seas to brackish and fresh waters. It is also a place of mahika kai that sustained whānau around its shores on a regular basis. On the stopbank at the Airport Avenue intersection stands ‘Kā Matau o Te Maramataka’, an acknowledgement of the seasonal calendar that continues to be so important for locals. It references the beauty, bounty and importance of the Kōreti estuary as it once was and could be. It is a nod towards aspirations for improved water quality, recovery of healthy habitats and the return of good indigenous species numbers.

‘Kā Matau o Te Maramataka’ features two fishhooks that can also be seen as tuna (eels). They represent the bringing together of the knowledges of different peoples. This mahi toi structure also features an aniwaniwa – or rainbow – which can be read as a good sign to move forward with endeavours.

## **Mana whenua/Rūnaka Rohe**

‘Te Ara Tūpuna’ traces an ancestral trail that connects Waihōpai / Invercargill city to Ōreti beach and the ancestral trails beyond.

This is within the takiwā area of Waihōpai Rūnaka with tribal activity focused on Murihiku Marae.

Waihōpai Rūnaka represent the rights and interests of Kāi Tahu Whānui who hold mana whenua, mana moana (customary authority over land and sea) associated with the central city and surrounds and extends to the interface with Te Rūnanga o Awarua at the Makatoatoa stream.

Mana whenua shared interests and responsibilities extend across Murihiku up to the Whakatipu/central lakes area and down to Te Ara-a-Kiwa (Foveaux Strait), to the outer islands and coastal seas.



## Te Mana a Kewa – the whale

The tohorā or whale plays a prominent part in the cultural narratives of Waihōpai Rūnaka. Kewa is the name of the whale that reputedly gnawed through the land that once connected Rakiura to Murihiku. Mahi toi - 'Te Mana a Kewa' - is a gesture of whakamanuhiri (welcoming visitors) and manaaki (generosity, respect and care) for those travelling to and from this region by air – visitors and residents alike. It is a reminder of the perseverance, grit and determination needed to achieve seemingly unattainable goals, intentions and visions – as was demonstrated by the whale, Kewa.

The end result is not only a statement of Waihōpaitaka in the takiwā of Murihiku, it also speaks to a process based on partnership, mutual respect and excellent working relationships. It appropriately marks a major gateway to the city and region, recognises the kaupapa and kōrero of Waihōpai whānau, and is something that the whole community can share in and be proud of.



### **There's a place for you on the Otatara Landcare group committee!**

**Love living in Otatara? Appreciating the amazing forest and birdlife? Interested in protecting this treasure for all? Thinking about serving your community?**

**If so, you'd be warmly welcomed to monthly meetings of the Otatara Landcare Group, which does all the above on half of our community. You'll be among outstanding and like-minded people with a passion for our amazing bio-diversity.**

**If you'd like to find out more please get in touch with Chris Rance, the OLCG secretary, on [otataralg@gmail.com](mailto:otataralg@gmail.com) or call 213 1161.**

# ESTUARY BIRDS



By Lloyd Esler

By my rough count, a least 60 species of birds have made the New River Estuary their home, even if fleetingly. This doesn't include the many land birds such as pipits, starlings and so on which feed around the fringes of the estuary. It's quite a good record and points to the estuary being a valuable and diverse habitat despite current concern about water quality and loss of habitat due to mud accumulation.

Bird populations change and there are more of some species and less of others than in former times. There are fewer godwits and other migrant waders in general due to mudflat reclamation along their flyway as they migrate to Siberia and Alaska up the western edge of the Pacific. They are hunted there as well, and more cyclone events are likely to knock out migrating birds. There are probably more Black-backed gulls, or there certainly were when the rubbish dump was a major source of takeaways. The spoonbill population continues to grow. There are fewer Black-billed gulls because of predation of nesting colonies in our major river beds – more kiwis (the feathered ones) in New Zealand now than Black-billed gulls. The world's southernmost Caspian terns nest on the shellbanks in the estuary but unexpected weather events make their existence precarious.

There are also a few relatively recent newcomers – Spoonbills, White-faced herons, Cattle egrets, swallows and Spur-winged plovers are new arrivals from the 1940s and 1950s. Odd vagrants turn up, many others no doubt overlooked. I remember Ian Gamble finding a dead Masked woodswallow on his bush track, only the second New Zealand record. It had the good sense to die on a path, in a place where predators and scavengers are heavily controlled and where the finder was interested enough to do something about it. Ian sent a picture of the bird which had had a decent burial in his garden by then. On finding what it was he dug it up and I got it, cleaned and smartened up but still dead.

The Roger Sutton Lagoon – the former rubbish



dump – has had more species of waterfowl recorded than anywhere else in New Zealand. As well as the usual suspects, in the last couple of years we have had Northern Shoveller, Chestnut-breasted shelduck, Chestnut teal and Northern pintail. These guys attract ornithologists, or more vulgarly, 'twitchers', from around the country.

We've had a Marsh sandpiper there for several summers. Intensive trapping around the lagoon means we are now seeing mallards with up to 12 youngsters in tow, and Marsh crakes poke around the edges of the rushes. At the entrance to the estuary at Omaui, the rocky shore provides good feeding for Reef herons, Black oystercatchers and Turnstones.

In the future we can expect more new species because more people are looking, and storm events in the Tasman can blow birds across in a few days. We can expect fewer birds overall, however, with the pressure of a changing climate and the impact of predators.



While the sycamore tree is an invasive pest plant in Otago,

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Where quality matters



# STEAD ST PUMP STATION



## Progress update from Environment Southland

The new Stead Street Pump Station is taking shape, and laying the outlet pipes from the new pump station to Kōreti New River Estuary has begun. The slab foundation was completed in March, and we can now see the main pump station walls going up.

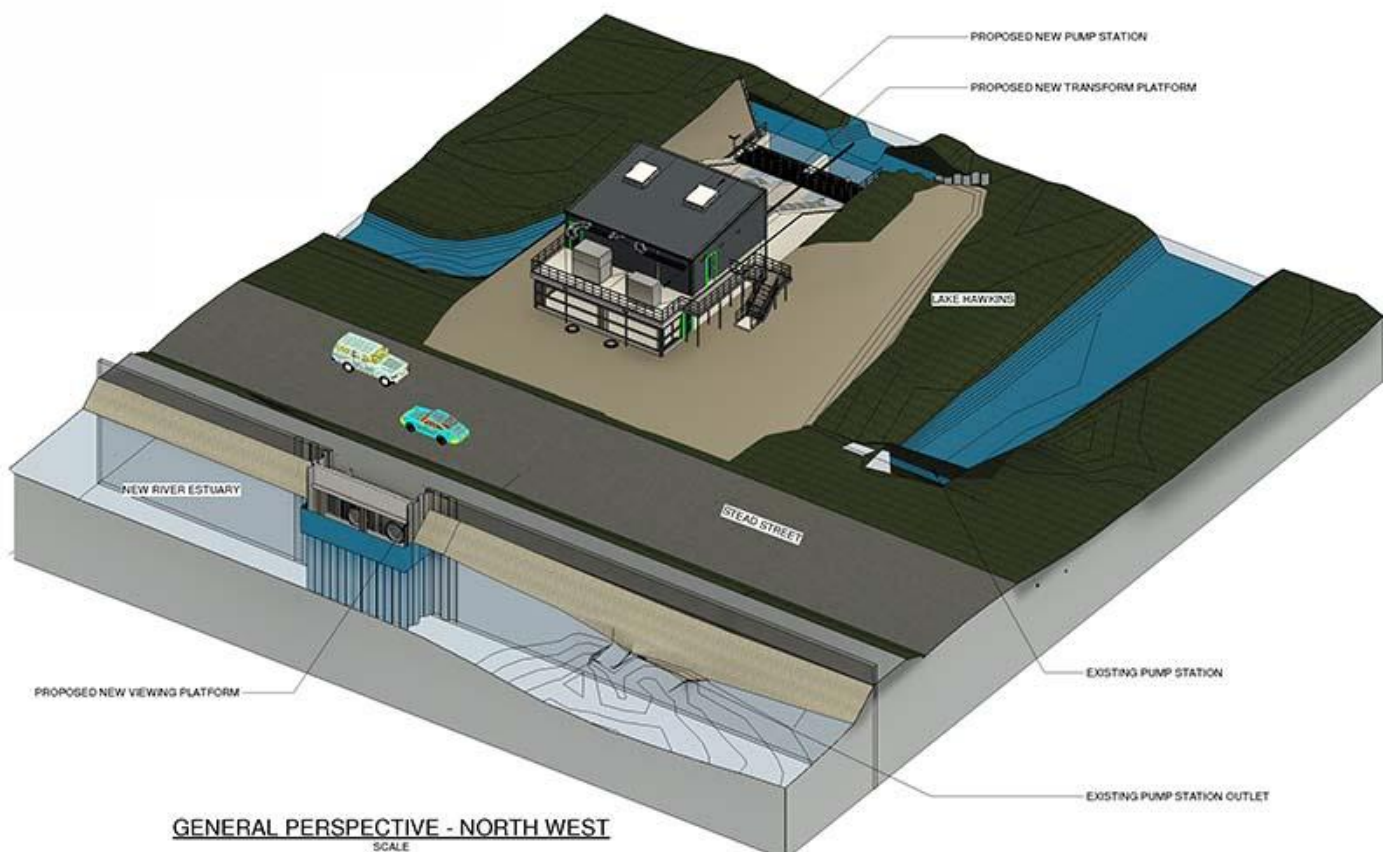
Progress invariably means short delays for commuters travelling between Invercargill and Otatara while the necessary work is being done. A reduced speed limit remains in place for traffic in both directions, and a stop/go for traffic in both directions will be reinstated when work from the road centre line to the estuary begins in June.

There are no disruptions for cycle and foot traffic along the shared pathway while the work from the pump station site to the road centre line is completed in the coming 4-6 weeks.

However, from June to August 2023, the shared pathway will be closed opposite the pump station to allow for the construction of a viewing platform over the flap gates. At this time, cyclist and pedestrian traffic will be diverted to the northern verge of Stead Street.

We wish to thank the Otatara community for your patience and support.

*The original Stead Street Pump Station is 70 years old and needs to be replaced. The contract, being delivered by Fulton Hogan, involves constructing a new pump house that will house two Archimedes screw pumps, providing safe fish passage, energy efficiency and reduced maintenance.*



# Otatara Landcare Group Membership



If you are not already a member and would like to help support the work of the Otatara Landcare Group, just fill in the form below and come and join us. We appreciate all our members both for their contributions of time and financial support. We can't do it without you.

## Membership Form

Please complete form for membership or if you require a receipt for any donation and email to [otataralg@gmail.com](mailto:otataralg@gmail.com).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Numbers: (Hm) \_\_\_\_\_

(Mobile): \_\_\_\_\_

Email: (for newsletters and events) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I give permission for my contact details to be retained exclusively for the purposes of communication in relation to the activities of Otatara Landcare Group.

### Subs:

**Subscription for Life Membership \$50**

**Donations:** also welcome! *NON-PROFIT CHARITABLE ORG. INC— CC47928*

*All donations of \$5 and over are tax deductible within allowable limits.*

Donation: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

OLG bank account **03 1355 0805312 00**

Please use your surname and “olg subs” or “olg don” in reference boxes.

Alternatively, send completed form with cash to our treasurer

**Lloyd Esler – 15 Mahuri Road, Otatara**

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