



Hoiho

June 2024

www.yellow-eyedpenguin.org.nz

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Urgent action needed to eliminate bycatch

Fishing industry bycatch is extremely concerning for the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust.

The Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust is eager to find an urgently needed solution to ongoing bycatch issues off the coast of the South Island.

Hoiho/yellow-eyed penguins are in a critical state. The northern population of hoiho that breed around the southeast coast of the South Island and Rakiura Stewart Island now number only 160 breeding pairs.

Their decline has been rapid – a 78% reduction in the number of breeding birds over the last 15 years, and a massive 18%

since just last year. We have reached the point where the survival of each bird, and particularly the female breeders, is paramount.

Our strategy has reflected this reality, with the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust working alongside numerous other organisations to ensure the survival of birds on land. Rangers work tirelessly to uplift birds for supplementary feeding through the moult, for treatment for injuries, and more recently for highly effective treatment of tiny chicks to combat disease. There is no doubt that without this work the hoiho would be in an even more perilous state. Unfortunately, keeping penguins alive at sea is something

we have little control over. We are unable to ensure that the right kind of fish are easily within reach at the right time, and that fledglings develop effective fishing strategies to catch them in order to thrive and survive.

We are also losing hoiho as bycatch in setnets. Four hoiho are known to have been bycaught since the roll-out of cameras across the inshore trawl and setnet fleets in October 2023. Twelve hoiho have been reported or observed as bycatch in the last five years. Fisheries New Zealand's recent report on the rollout of on-board cameras on commercial fishing vessels records substantial increases in fisher reporting of protected species interactions.

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Hoiho braving the hail to protect its nest on Whenua Hou Codfish Island

The northern population of hoiho can no longer sustain direct mortalities like this. Mortalities are particularly concerning for the long-term survival of the population when breeding birds are lost. Recently, the last breeding female from Sandfly Bay was caught in a setnet off Otago. This type of event is catastrophic for a small local hoiho colony.

The Trust's approach to bycatch is guided by Te Kāweka Takohaka mō te Hoiho, which is the strategy to support the ecological and cultural health of hoiho. The Trust and its Hoiho Governance Partners (Te Rūnanga

o Ngāi Tahu, Department of Conservation and Fisheries New Zealand) are committed to ensuring bycatch does not threaten hoiho (Strategic Priority 6). Under this, Fisheries NZ has been leading a multi-threat risk assessment with input from the Trust, Ngāi Tahu, the Department of Conservation and Seafood New Zealand to identify key drivers of decline including bycatch.

What can we do to support this strategic approach? For a start we need to ensure that the information we are getting at sea continues to be accurate, that means advocating for the retention of cameras on

fishing vessels. It also means continuing to work alongside fisherman, who don't set out to catch penguins, to move to more sustainable methods which do not involve set net use and put in place voluntary restrictions. Expect to see more action from us in this space.

Compared to other threats faced by hoiho, eradicating bycatch is something that is easily within our grasp and power to do something about.



We're expecting

The Wildlife Hospital Dunedin and Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust are thrilled to announce our upcoming 2024 baby shower!

Get ready for an outpouring of precious moments, sleepless nights, and boundless love as we prepare to welcome our newest arrivals into the world.

Join us online from September to celebrate the joy of new beginnings and the arrival of our 2024 chicks.



First Marine Reserves for Otago

It is great news that the Minister for Conservation finally announced plans for six new marine reserves between Timaru and the Catlins.

These will be the first reserves for the southeast coast of the South Island (previously no marine reserves existed between Pōhātu on Banks Peninsula and Te Tapuwae o Hua in Fiordland). The marine reserves are part of a proposed network of marine protected areas and are designed to protect important coastal habitats, as well as contribute to national and international marine protection goals and commitments.

An immense amount of work has been ongoing for almost a decade to plan and recommend marine protection options. Initially, the South-East Marine Protection Forum/Te Roopu Manaaki ki te Toka with representatives from Kāi Tahu, commercial and recreational fishers, environment, science and tourism and local communities, presented two different protection networks after extensive consultation. The government chose to proceed with network one, and following this community members and stakeholders were again very keen to have their say, resulting in more than 4000 submissions about the proposal (90% of which were supportive of marine protection).

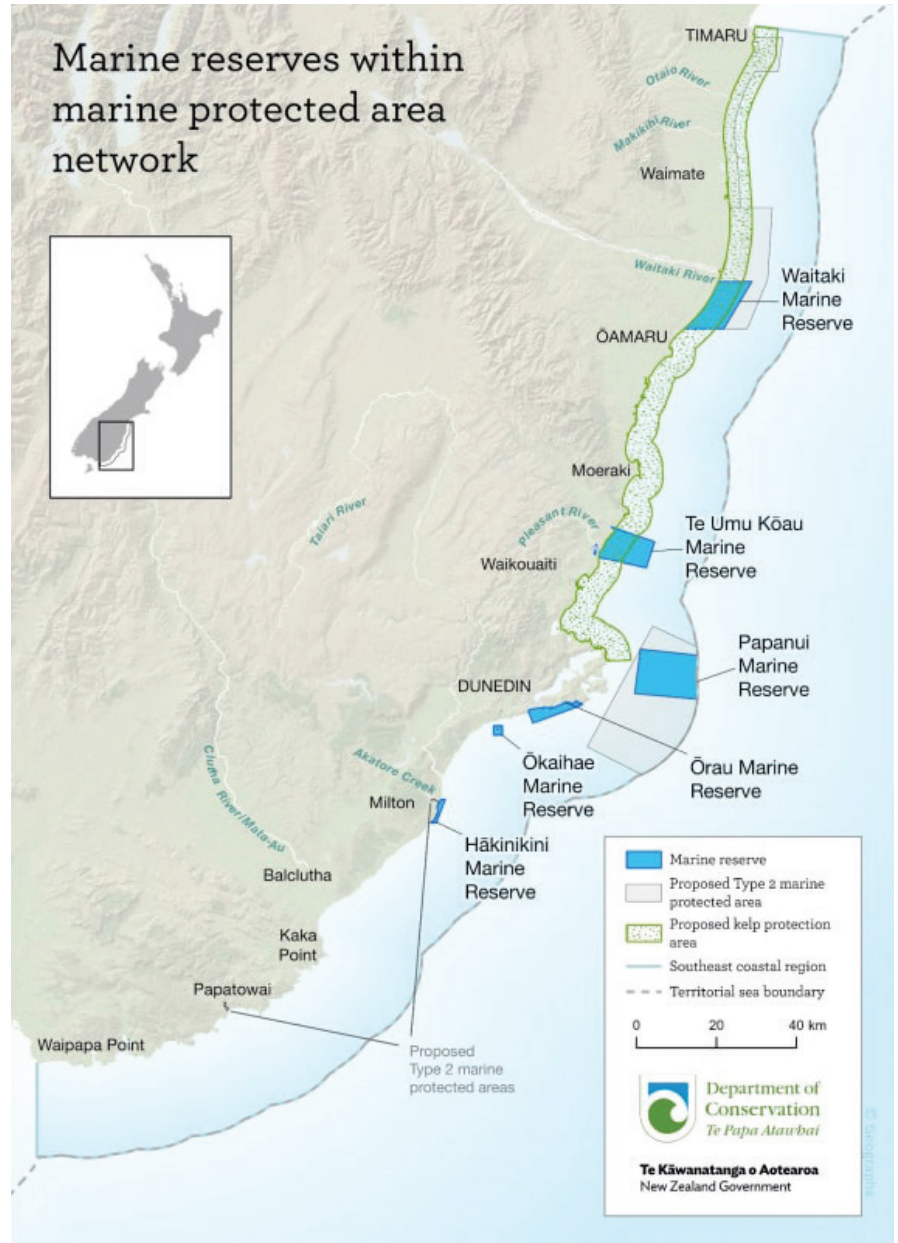
The marine reserves are hoped to be in place shortly following an Order in Council and gazetting process. The six reserves

are designed to protect a range of habitats (e.g. estuarine lagoons, rocky reefs, offshore canyons, kelp forests, bryozoan thickets and seagrass beds), as well as the fish and other species which inhabit them. The reserves range widely in size: Waitaki (101km²), Te Umu Kōau (98km²), Papanui (168km²), Ōrau (29km²), Ōkaihae (5km²) and Hākinikini (6km²). See the map below.

A 'kelp protection' area and five 'type-2 marine protection' areas make up the rest of the proposed network of marine protection and are up for consideration by the Minister for Oceans and Fisheries.

The Trust is enormously supportive of

the marine reserves as they are likely to have broad benefits for the coastal Otago ecosystem. However, they were designed to protect benthic habitat types, rather than focus on species, so are unlikely to directly protect hoiho from the threat of bycatch and the effects of fishing on their habitat. In a recent scientific publication which uses hoiho tracking data, PhD researcher Rachel Hickox from the University of Otago, shows that only 1.3% of hoiho habitat would be protected by the six marine reserves (aka Type 1 reserves). An additional 2.3% of hoiho habitat would be protected by the rest of the proposed network of Type 2 reserves, resulting in a total 3.6%.



Hoiho symposium

SATURDAY 3 AUGUST 2024

Registrations will be opening soon. More details on Facebook and our website closer to the date.

www.yellow-eyedpenguin.org.nz



Hoiho season update

Despite successes with raising chicks to fledge, the ranger team fears an ongoing decline as few juveniles are sighted and female breeders are lost during the season.

The field team was out and about at the start of the season in October searching for sign of hoiho and their nests; following trails through the undergrowth, disturbances in the leaf litter; tell-tale signs of poo and the distinctive whiff of a hoiho nest. Sadly, penguin sign is much reduced as hoiho colonies get significantly quieter each successive season.

There are now only 19 breeding pairs at sites monitored by the Trust in coastal Otago and the Catlins compared to 27 last season. There was some good news from Rakiura though with the Department of Conservation hiring a ranger specifically to monitor hoiho. Sara Larcombe is a highly skilled ranger, and worked with Trust contractor Sandy King to sniff out hoiho nests on the island.

Thankfully, nests numbers on Rakiura did not decline as significantly as the mainland; 20 nests (down 9% from 22 nests last season). Dean Nelson, Dave Houston, and Vincent Leith were hampered by hail and wintery conditions this season while searching Whenua Hou. They braved the weather, but regrettably only 6 nests were found, an all-time low for the island (7 last season, 60 in its heyday).

Across the entire northern population of hoiho (South Island and Rakiura) nest numbers have again fallen (by 78% since 2008) and the current estimate is just 163 breeding pairs (196 pairs last year).

November is a challenging month for field workers and also staff at the Wildlife Hospital in Dunedin when newly hatched chicks are highly susceptible to various diseases. Monitoring and treatment for small chicks is a well-oiled machine after refinement over several seasons. All of the chicks (at YEPT monitored sites) were uplifted to hospital at three days old, and all except two had signs of minor diphtheritic stomatitis (DS). Early uplift meant that antibiotics were not required for treatment of most chicks, and now very few deaths are attributed to DS (only one this season). Respiratory Distress Syndrome (RDS) is still an issue however and the cause of about half of the chick deaths. Encouragingly, RDS also appears to be minimised by in-hospital treatment.

Parent birds spent about five days sitting tight on a dummy egg while chicks were in hospital. Chicks were then switched back into nests, and continued to be monitored regularly to ensure that they were healthy and well fed. Hospital release rates were very high this season with 97% of YEPT-monitored chicks released back to the wild.

The mainland is however in stark contrast to Rakiura where there is no disease treatment of young chicks. Additional monitoring this season found that many chicks died within 2-3 weeks of hatch, due to disease.

This resulted in very low nest productivity and by early December only four chicks remained at annually searched sites. There are huge opportunities to replicate the successful management of chicks on the mainland to improve survival for chicks in the future on Rakiura.

Chicks in North Otago and Otago Peninsula needed little intervention between release from hospital and fledge in February. This was in contrast to the Catlins where most chicks needed significant supplementary feeds. An ongoing lack of food resulted in the uplift of 19 chicks from the Catlins to rehab at the OPERA (Otago Peninsula Eco-Restoration Alliance) prior to fledge.

To return these chicks to the wild we needed to transition them from short-term captivity to the wild. This year 34 chicks (from YEPT and other Catlins sites) were soft-released in three groups. Despite lengthy stays in rehab, all but two of the chicks headed immediately out to sea within an hour of their enclosures being opened.

Following chick raising the team then moved into regular searches for underweight adults during the moult and for any birds with injuries. Less help was required this year compared to last, but still almost 65% of adult birds needed some assistance and were uplifted to rehab or hospital.

Marine resources were clearly insufficient to sustain last season's chicks, with very few (only c.4) juveniles seen across the mainland this season. This doesn't bode well for recruitment next breeding season.

Sadly, a couple of breeding females also died this year; one was euthanised due to nerve and tendon damage, and another died from a bacterial infection. Two females were also not found during the moult in the Catlins.

Without new breeders to take their place we are looking at a 20% reduction in YEPT monitored nests on the mainland next season.

REGION	SITE	NESTS 2023/24	(2022/23)	EGGS	CHICKS HATCHED	CHICKS FLEDGED	CHICKS PER NEST
Kātiki North Otago	Tavora	2	1	4	4	4	2.0
	Okia	2	1	4	3	1	0.5
Ōtakou Otago Peninsula	Otapahi	2	6	4	3	2	1.0
	Whareakeake & Kaikai	0	0				
	Otekiho & Allans	0	0				
	Papanui South	0	0	9 nests at the entire Papanui site, 12 in 2022-23			
Tokatā Catlins	Irahuka Long Point	8	10	16	15	12	1.5
	Cosgrove Creek	2	5	4	4	4	2.0
	Helena Falls	2 ¹	3	4	4	3	1.5
	Harts Rock	1	1	2	1	1	1.0
	Purakaunui	0	0				
Rakiura Stewart Island	Rollers Beach	2 ²	2	4	4	1	0.5
	Golden Beach	0	0				
	The Neck	0	0				
	Glory Cove	4	5	8	8	1	0.13
	Steep Head	2	2	3	2	1	0.5
	Bravo Islands	7	6	13	10	0	0.0
	Whenua Hou	6	7	12	11 ³	4	0.66

¹ One nest found later in season, assumed two eggs and both hatched (based on previous fertility), and one chick died

² No hatch check, so for some nests we have no data – all chicks were assumed to have hatched.

³ One nest found later in season (December).



Rakiura rehab welcomes new vet nurse

Hoiho enjoying a salt water spray from Emma Simpson-Boyce

Building on the success of previous seasons, the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust's rehabilitation centre for underweight penguins opened for its third year. The facility is located inside a predator-proof fence at Mamaku Point Conservation Reserve, on the northeast coast of Rakiura Stewart Island.

Starting in March, Trudi Webster and DOC hoiho ranger Sara Larcombe were out and about with volunteers, searching for penguins that had not managed to put on enough weight for their annual moult. This year many of the birds on Rakiura were very light and unlikely to survive for 3-4 weeks on land while they replaced all of their feathers. During the moult hoiho can't go to sea and fish because they're not waterproof.

Twenty-five noisy hoiho and one tawaki were in need of a helping hand and some extra servings of fish this season. Two of our lightest patients were a breeding pair weighing in at only 3.5kg and 3.9kg when they were initially found part way through their moult. These birds needed careful rehydration and a very slow introduction to food to avoid refeeding syndrome which can cause the organs to shut down.

Two of the hoiho needed additional veterinary treatment and surgeries for

foot injuries and were transported to the Wildlife Hospital in Dunedin for expert care. One of these birds (uplifted in mid-May) is still at the hospital. All of the other birds were released back to their uplift site or close to it once they had completed their moult and reached a good weight (5-6kg).

Trudi handed the running of the rehab facility this season to Rakiura local **Emma Simpson-Boyce** who is a trained vet nurse and also works part-time for the Stewart Island / Rakiura Community and Environment Trust (SIRCET). As well as on the job training, Emma spent some time with colleagues at the Wildlife Hospital in Dunedin and the Otago Peninsula Eco-Restoration Alliance (OPERA, formerly Penguin Place) brushing up on her hoiho handling and feeding skills. YEPT is delighted to have Emma on board to further develop the rehab facility.

The Rakiura community has been super supportive of the Trust's efforts to keep this rehab facility running. A big thank you to Mamaku Point Conservation Trust – Rachel and Roy Thompson, Ant Simpson and Matt Hare for giving us space in the reserve and backing us all the way. Rakiura Māori Lands Trust have supported us from the start, and enabled us to access hoiho on their land. Sandy King has shared her amazing

depth of knowledge over the last few years which has made finding birds and accessing colonies possible. Matt and Alina Atkins, the crew at Rakiura Charters and Water Taxi, and Ed Small (DOC skipper of the Hananui) helped transport birds and people to and from penguin colonies. RealNZ have helped us ship fish, cages and various bits of equipment over to Rakiura from the mainland. Sam and Rebecca Guest kindly allowed Trudi to set up camp at their place, and drive stinky penguins around the island in their car. Special thanks to Fergus for getting up early to help look after the penguins before heading off to school.

Fish for penguins was more difficult to source this season, but salmon smolt and silverside was generously donated by Sanford Limited, scad from Solander Gourmet Seafoods and jack mackerel and sardines from Seafood Bazaar. Southern Seafoods supported us by storing additional fish supplies at the fishermen's coop. Additional funding from the Department of Conservation helped to support Emma's role this season.

A big thank you from the bottom of our hearts to all of those who have supported the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust to set up and keep this facility running.

Our Sue



Sue Murray retires after 24 years serving the Trust as general manager

Words by Lala Frazer and Euan Kennedy (The Venerables and Founding Trustees).

We would like to celebrate Sue – our Sue – on behalf of the folks who have populated the Trust since its very earliest days – its founders, the trustees who followed, its staff, countless volunteers, supporters, long-term associates and patrons.

Let's call ourselves The Venerables. There have been a very great many of us indeed, a colourful family of passions, persuasions and talents.

We're sure all these folks would like to have a voice at this significant threshold in the Trust's history.

The Trust has been blessed with outstanding employees. It became apparent early on that Trustees alone could not manage governance and operational workloads adequately. We had few sensible hopes of progress without our staff. Their gifts of sincerity and hard work have given the Trust traction and credibility beyond our mere stating of hoiho need.

This is no more wonderfully demonstrated than in Sue's restless investments in the Trust's life and work. Sue, you arrived at precisely the right time. Our horizons were broadening and our operations diversifying, sometimes frantically. Business was growing increasingly complex. The confounding politics of YEP conservation were already very demanding.

Though just a youngster at the time, you brought maturity and judgement to these pressures from the outset – qualities you yourself may not have been confident of possessing. You managed us with the pleasantly agreeable manner we will all miss. You brought a mind alert to opportunities too. Has there been anything you couldn't tackle?

You have invested the Trust with superb leadership and discipline. More than one Trust board has needed firm guidance of this sort. In truth, you've been the unelected other trustee throughout your tenure. Few Trust people could dispute how much easier you have made it to meet our duties and objectives.

Notably, you came to us as a people-person – able to converse comfortably with those in authority and in the funds – the very associates and audiences the Trust needed to reach. You gave the Trust a confident public face. Our mana derives as much from you as it does from the nobility of the YEP cause. We should not underestimate how critical this has been to potential funders looking for assurance that the Trust is a safe investment.

The faith we earlier trustees placed in you has been rewarded every month since you arrived. The Trust's affairs have been in exceptionally safe hands.

So, Sue, with your leaving, the Trust is losing a quarter of a century's surpassingly stable bedrock. This is tough for any NGO. It is especially tough for our Trust. Your story is an especially vibrant blaze of energy running through the narrative of our story. But the joy of working with you eases the pain of saying goodbye. All those warm memories, Sue, (OK, some not so warm) of all those good people and good times in the Trust family. You'll always be family to us, Sue.

From the Venerables, thank you.



1999
2023



Thank you

Money matters

Earlier this year the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust was granted some funds through a grant from the World Wide Fund for Nature/ The Tindall Foundation. These funds support our critical work in hoiho management in protecting and conserving the nationally endangered hoiho and their habitat.

As a not-for-profit organisation, the Trust has been able to continue to work towards this objective since its inception in 1987.

Like many organisations post-Covid, the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust is facing financial challenges, this situation has been compounded by the recent withdrawal of funding support from the Department of Conservation.

Historically we have received financial support through the DOC Community Fund and more recently Jobs For Nature. Combined with the committed support from Mainland, the reliance on the Community Fund as a regular source of funding enabled the Trust to feel confident offering employment contracts to our Operations Manager, General Manager, Administrator, Rangers and Science Advisor. The Community Fund has provided approximately \$100,000 annually.

The Trust has been fortunate that over the last three years we have been the beneficiary of some generous legacies which have been timely and allowed the Trust to fund the Science Advisor's role since the Otago Regional Council support for this role ceased. This role is key in providing valuable science advice across the whole hoiho community.

The philosophy of the Trust is to use the money that has been donated for the purposes of hoiho conservation, we do not have the intention of preserving bank balances.

Our financial forecast for the year ended 30th September 2024, without the funding support we have historically had, will result in a deficit of \$160,000.

This loss will significantly deplete our financial reserves and the Trust will need to consider the ongoing viability of continuing operations as we have known.

One of the intangible assets that the Trust has is you – our membership base of over 400 individuals.

The annual membership fee of \$20 has not changed in over 12 years. One of the actions the Trust is considering is a substantial increase in the annual fee. As an example, an increase to \$100 per year would raise \$40,000 which would contribute significantly to support a Ranger role. Alternatively, implementing a tiered membership system would allow members to choose their level of support and corresponding benefits.

We are acutely aware everything is going up in cost significantly right now – it is not an easy time for most people. Therefore, it would be great to get your feedback as to whether changes as substantial as this would be supported or not. Please feel free to drop us an email to admin@yeptrust.org.nz with your thoughts.

On behalf of all the Trustees and Staff, I would like to thank you for your ongoing support and interest in the activities of the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust.

Tim Mepham, YEPT Treasurer



Make a statement

Get ready to make a statement for a cause that truly matters!

We're thrilled to announce our collaboration with Little Yellow Bird to bring you exclusive penguin-themed t-shirts, designed to raise awareness and support for our beloved wildlife here in Otepoti Dunedin.

Crafted from 100% super soft, organic cotton, these t-shirts aren't just fashion statements, they're a commitment to sustainability and conservation. With sizes available for both children and adults, everyone can join in on the mission to protect our precious wildlife.

But the impact doesn't stop at style. Every purchase of these tees contributes directly to the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust, Wildlife Hospital, and the Otago Peninsula Eco Restoration Alliance, organisations dedicated to safeguarding at-risk and endangered species in our region.

By sporting these shirts, featuring hoiho, korora and tawaki, you're not just wearing a piece of clothing – you're becoming an ambassador for change.

Join us in this noble cause. Get your penguin tee today and wear your support proudly!

Keep an eye on littleyellowbird.com and our social media for when these t-shirts sales go live.



WWF for nature

We are excited to announce that the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust has been successful in securing funding for 2024 through a Community Conservation Fund grant. These funds will help support our critical work to protect and conserve the nationally endangered hoiho and their habitat.

WWF is a global organisation dedicated to conserving nature and reducing threats to the diversity of life on our planet. WWF-NZ provides grants to community groups in partnership with The Tindall Foundation through the Community Conservation Fund.

Comings and goings



Peter

TRUSTEES RETIRE

Peter Simkins

In March this year Peter Simkins stepped down from the board after 29 years dedicated to the Trust. Peter joined the Trust Board in 1995 and was Trust Chair in the early 2010s.

Peter also had a significant role in the purchase of Irahuka Long Point Reserve.

Peter fondly remembers an enjoyable evening talking rugby and penguins with Trust Patron Anton Oliver. He will also forever hold onto a trip to Mason Bay in which he was lucky enough to see a kiwi in the wild. We thank you, Peter, for your service across three decades to hoiho conservation.



Ben

Ben Goldsworthy

Ben started with the Trust in April 2017 and has been a hardworking asset to the team with an immense knowledge of both habitat and hoiho work. Ben acted as Operations Manager for six months this season and resigned in February 2024 to pursue a mechanical engineering course at Otago Polytechnic.

NEW CHAIR

Gus Griffin

Meet Gus, our new chair, in "A Note from the Chair" on page 12.

NEW TRUSTEE

Eiren Sweetman

Eiren Sweetman is a conservation scientist with a PhD in Molecular Biology, and has recently returned to Dunedin to research the diet and health of hoiho after a few years in Wellington studying kauri dieback disease. She has regularly volunteered with hoiho and other endangered New Zealand wildlife since 2012.



Eiren

NEW TRUSTEE

Dan Whitburn

Dan Whitburn joins the Trust from a legal education and background in not-for-profit mahi, with his day job as Kaiwhakamarama for Te Hou Ora Whānau Services. He has a strong passion for animal welfare and has fostered dogs with Dog Rescue Dunedin for four years.



Dan

NEW RANGER

McKenzie Inch

Working with animals has always been a passion of McKenzie's and after studying equine as a sporthorse assistant and working for Riding for the Disabled, McKenzie joined the Trust as a ranger in October last year.



McKenzie

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YEPT staff with colleagues from the Wildlife Hospital Dunedin and University of Otago

Wild Dunedin Ball

In a collaborative effort, the Dunedin Wildlife Hospital, Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust and The OPERA – Otago Peninsula Eco Restoration Alliance – have joined forces to help save the fewer than 500 remaining hoiho on the South Island of New Zealand. The partners work together with others to monitor, uplift, treat, and rehabilitate sick, injured, and starving hoiho, ultimately releasing them back into the wild. Through the alliance, the organisations care for more than half of this population each year in a valiant effort to preserve this taonga species from extinction.

While the three groups have been working alongside each other for years, the recent increased efforts in hoiho conservation have led us to form a more collaborative unit. As partners with a purpose we are working together more and in a more intentional way, by supporting each other in our daily operational work and to raise urgently needed funds. Our collaboration leads to better outcomes for hoiho, greater efficiencies for our organisations, the sharing of knowledge and nourishment of a collegial spirit.

To launch the partnership, and more importantly to fundraise for our feathered friends, a masquerade ball was held as part of the Wild Dunedin Festival. Supporters enjoyed an enchanted evening at Larnach Castle of live music, delectable locally-sourced wild canapés, food matched drinks and a silent auction. Many of the guests let their imaginations run wild and truly dressed to impress with nature-themed costumes and masks.

We were blown away by the generosity of the many donors for the fantastic auction prizes. Heartfelt thanks to Annett Eiselt from Observation Rock Lodge, Tessa and Vic Mills from Fantail Lodge in Dunedin, Ange Karaitiana from Beaks & Feathers in Rakiura, artists Michel Tuffery and Hannah Shand, Stewart Island Flights, the PurePods team, RealNZ and Glenfalloch Garden Café and Restaurant.

Thanks to the generous support of sponsors, suppliers, performers and guests almost \$50,000 was raised for hoiho conservation at this sold-out event. Due to its popularity the Wild Dunedin ball may become an annual event – watch this space!



Our very own Southern Hoiho basketball team

Go the Hoiho

The launch of the Tauihi Basketball Aotearoa league in 2022, marked a significant milestone for women's basketball in New Zealand.

Tauihi, meaning "to soar" in Te Reo Māori, symbolises empowerment and growth. Comprising five regional teams, including our local team, the Southern Hoiho, the league aims to elevate the sport's visibility and impact.

The 2023 season concluded, with BNZ Northern Kāhu clinching the championship title after a thrilling victory over ANZCO Tokomanawa Queens in the Grand Final. We extend our gratitude to the community for their support during home games, where we also fundraised for hoiho conservation efforts.

Looking ahead, we eagerly anticipate the 2024 season, set to kick off on 4th October with a match between Tokomanawa Queens and Southern Hoiho in Porirua. The league has made some exciting changes, including doubling player wages and opening up the opportunity for international teams to join, further enhancing the competitiveness and appeal of the league.

Additionally, the playing season has been shifted to October, November, and December to maximise exposure and engagement with fans and media globally. Every game will continue to be broadcast live on Sky Sport, ensuring widespread access for fans across Aotearoa.

The Southern Hoiho's first home game will take place on Saturday 12th October at the Edgar Centre, and we encourage all of our supporters to join us in cheering for the Southern Hoiho during the upcoming season.





Nine NZ awards for Mainland

We've been busy here at Mainland with the New Zealand Cheese Awards season!

We were chuffed to take out nine medals this year for our delicious Mainland cheeses. At the Gala Dinner in May we came away with two Champion Trophies for our new Chilli & Garlic Brie and to top that our Mainland Special Reserve Epicure Aged Cheddar took out the top award of Champion of Champions – making it the best NZ Cheese. Aged for up to 36 months, its intense flavour and crumbly texture wowed the judges.

With the winter months fast approaching and the weather cooling down we're looking forward to cosy meals indoors with family and friends. If you're looking for inspiration, try our One Pan Chicken Parmesan dish. It's a fabulously delicious and easy midweek meal for four, crowned with Mainland Mozzarella and Parmesan. Get ready for some big flavours from very simple ingredients that you and the family will love.

You can find the recipe at mainland.co.nz or here: <http://bit.ly/4bDoo3l>



Our thanks

Thank you to our regular supporters:

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Department of Conservation
Downie Stewart
DCC (Task Force Green team)
Dunedin Airport
Fisher & Paykel
Forest & Bird South Otago Branch
Jane and Jim Young
Jobs for Nature
Mainland Brand
Mamaku Point Conservation Trust
NZ Deerstalkers Association (Otago Branch)
Otago Peninsula Biodiversity Group
Otago Peninsula Eco Restoration Alliance (formerly Penguin Place)
Penguin Rescue
Rakiura Māori Lands Trust
Roy Johnstone
Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu
Whenua Hou Komiti
Wildlife Hospital Dunedin
Yrless (Joe Stringer)

Thank you for funding from:

City Forests
Department of Conservation
Eleanor Hazel Carr
Grummit Sisters Charitable Trust
Ian and Denille Hamilton, Southern Insulation
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WWF Community Conservation Fund
Sincere thanks to all those people who make donations through our online portal. We truly appreciate this support.

Special thanks this issue to:

Angela Karaitiana at Beaks & Feathers
Ant Simpson
Annett Eiselt at Observation Rock Lodge
Brian and Jan O'Callaghan
Catlins Information Centre
CBK Craft Bar and Kitchen
Clutha iSite Visitor Information Centre
Dave Alden and Elaine Slater
Distinction Hotel Dunedin
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Michel Tuffery
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Neil Sheppard
Otago Polytechnic Horticulture Students
Ōtepoti Dunedin iSite Visitor Information Centre
Parsonson Family
Phil Page
Puawai Swindells-Wallace
PurePods
Rachel and Roy Thomson
Rakiura National Park Visitor Centre
RealNZ
Sanford
Seafood Bazaar
Southern Hoiho
Stewart Island Flights
Solander Gourmet Seafoods
Tessa and Vic Mills at Fantail Lodge
Tāne Davis
YEPT staff partners
Yi-Pei Chung

Thank you to:

All the landowners who have contributed to our habitat protection work

Thank you to all Volunteers:

We are tremendously grateful to all the other volunteers, including the regular Nursery workers, those that helped with hoiho work out in the field and at the rehab facility, and the Habitat Volunteer Team for their valuable contributions to our work.

Special thanks to the team at AdArt Brand Promotion for the design of this newsletter





Pictured above with the sticks is Lala Frazer "limping the lap".

130 laps for 130 nests at The Caley

The Trust held a community relay event at the Caledonian Grounds on Saturday, 11 November last year, to raise awareness of the shrinking hoiho nest numbers on mainland Aotearoa: 130 laps for 130 nests, totalling 52 km.

The occasion marked the conclusion of Forest and Bird's "Bird of the Century" competition, and we asked all participants to vote for hoiho for this esteemed award. The relay brought participants of all ages and fitness levels together, united by a common cause. The 130 laps were not just a physical feat but a symbolic gesture of our shared responsibility to protect and preserve the yellow-eyed penguin and its fragile ecosystem.

A huge thank you to everyone who came along and got involved, especially those from Hill City Athletics Club and our friends from Southern Hoiho Basketball. These super fit supporters meant we were able to speed up the average lap time, allowing some of our less fit friends and whanau to complete a few comfortable walking laps. In total, 36 participants ran, walked, waddled, and

limped, carrying our plush hoiho baton from 5pm until 9:30 pm. It was a true Dunner Stunner evening, with a high of 23 degrees!

A special thank you to Lala Frazer, a current and founding Trustee, for opening the event with "Lala's Limping Lap" and raising over \$1,000 for hoiho conservation.

Unfortunately the hoiho wasn't successful at making the top five, and after the Pūteketeke gained the backing of British-American comedian John Oliver; a record number of votes came in for the Australasian crested grebe.

The 2023 top five were as follows.

- First: Pūteketeke, 290,374 votes
- Second: North Island brown kiwi, 12,904

- Third: Kea, 12,060
- Fourth: Kakāpō, 10,889
- Fifth: Pūwakawaka fantail, 7,857

Join us this October for our 2024 #VoteHoiho for Bird of the Year campaign.



Pūteketeke Photo: Steve Attwood, via Forest & Bird website



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Leave something in paradise

Please remember the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust in your Will. Your bequest can be invested in restoring penguin habitats and controlling predators to help secure the survival of hoiho.

Charities Commission Registration Number CC22822



A note from the Chair



Tēnā koutou katoa

As a newbie to the role of Trust Chair, I have been perusing the witty columns prepared by Eric Shelton for inspiration. I won't try and be as funny as Eric because that is a task that I will forever fail at. Regardless I am very excited to be writing this newsletter introduction, despite the imposter syndrome I have from walking in Eric's shoes.

This newsletter is significant in being the first released following a changing of the guard at the top of the Trust.

In September last year our long serving General Manager, Sue Murray, transitioned into a well-earned retirement in Christchurch. Sue is passionate, kind, knowledgeable and loyal. I (like so many other people associated with the Trust) will forever be indebted to Sue for the sacrifices that she made for this organisation and for these amazing penguins. It is to Sue's credit that she has spent much of her early retirement answering calls from myself and other trustees, normally after a bit of head scratching and someone uttering "Sue will know the answer to that". For Sue's contribution over the years, we are forever grateful.

Peter Simkins too has stepped down as a Trustee. For those who don't know Peter he served as Trust Chair in the early 2000s. Peter has been a wonderful and cheerful presence at Board Meetings, and he will be dearly missed. Peter – you and Ceinwen are welcome at any and all future events to ensure that we still get to see you, even if you aren't technically a Trustee.

Eric too has finally decided to give himself more time after stepping down as Trust Chair, a role which he held for more than a decade. As alluded to above Eric's cunning wit and relentless commitment will be sorely missed. But he continues to chime in as Trustee.

Many of these people have been associated with the Trust for all, or at least most of my time on this planet. They have given huge sacrifice to help support hoiho and will continue to do so in their 'retirement'. I am well aware that myself and others have some big shoes to fill. Although the Board may be transitioning into a new chapter, our mission remains the same: working towards increasing the number of yellow eyed penguins on a self-sustaining basis within the natural coastal ecosystem. To help save this species we are going to need Sue, Peter and Eric's passion in abundance in this next generation. I fear without it we may not see these penguins on New Zealand's shores 20 years from now.

In this issue you will see a call to action from our Treasurer, Tim Mepham. I assure you that thanks to Tim (and others) the Trust is a tightly run ship. But as Tim points out our philosophy is to use the money that is donated for use in hoiho conservation. We do not have the intention of preserving bank balances. With penguin nests numbering around 130 on the Mainland, now is the time to be utilising our funds to the maximum to turn the species around.

The Trust has been fortunate that over the last three years we have been the beneficiary of some generous legacies which have been timely and allowed the Trust to self-fund the Science Advisor's role since the Otago Regional Council support for this role ceased. But if there is any time to help support our mission, that time is now.

I will repeat the whakatauki that I used in the annual report, because it carries a lot of meaning for me personally, and for the task that the Trust is trying to achieve. The people above never gave up on hoiho, and we won't either:

Kaua e Mate Wheke, Me Mate Ururoa. Don't die like an octopus, die like a shark

Ngā mihi
Gus Griffin, Chair

Give a tree. Or a trap. Or a YEPT membership

For the keen conservationist or someone who has it all, why not give a gift that keeps on giving? All proceeds will support habitat restoration, trapping efforts and ongoing operational work for the unique hoiho.

For more information on how to purchase a voucher, please contact our Administrator on 03-479-0011, enquiries@yeptrust.org.nz or visit our website www.yellow-eyedpenguin.org.nz/vouchers



The production of this Hoiho newsletter by AdArt Brand Promotion ticks all the green boxes

Penguins. Plants. People. Passion.

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