

YELLOW-EYED PENGUIN TRUST NEWS

November 2003

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The Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust, A charity working to save our penguins forever for everyone!

Stewart Island research

The effect of cat control on yellow-eyed penguins

Three years of census work by the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust has suggested that penguins may be in decline on Stewart Island. The cause and rate of this decline is not known, but feral cats are suspected to play a role because they are the only land-based predator on Stewart Island large enough to kill a penguin. The decline does not appear to be food related, as surveyed pest free islands have healthier penguin populations.

Feral cats on Stewart Island were introduced from Europe. Early European settlers brought cats to New Zealand from 1769 onward, as a control agent on rat infested ships. However, it may have taken around fifty years for a feral population to become established on the mainland. Ships have visited Stewart Island since 1804, and in 1909 Cockayne reported cats to be "common".

There is no evidence that they grow any larger than cats which live in a domestic setting. Male cats on Stewart Island average 3.4kg and females 2.6kg. Cats are efficient predators and hunt diurnally and nocturnally. They will live in almost all habitats. Inland their diet is composed mainly of rats (60%),

although birds (19%) and invertebrates (15%) together also from a significant portion.

The Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust is seeking funding for a five-year study into the impact of cats on yellow-eyed penguins. The research proposal will study whether the control of cats has a positive effect on the breeding success of yellow-eyed penguins on Stewart Island. One area will have as many cats killed as possible and another will be left as a control area. We are interested to know if this will show us that the fledging success in the targeted area is greater.

The funds for year one, have been guaranteed by the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust thanks to our unexpected donation from Contact Energy and will start in October 2003-March 2004. The project will again be supervised by our Projects Officer, David Blair.

The Trust is delighted to acknowledge the tremendous logistical support offered from the Department of Conservation Southern Islands Area Office in particular, the Stewart Island Field Centre.



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Trust welcomes funding for a variety of projects

(see centre spread for full details)

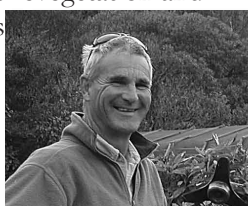
Biodiversity Condition and Advice Fund

The Trust was successful in gaining funding from: Department of

Conservation Biodiversity Condition and Advice fund for 3 special projects:

1. the employment of a Ranger, David McFarlane, to oversee the revegetation and pest control programmes on our reserves;

2. to continue to fund our Projects Officer, David Blair, position in an advisory role; and



3. to run pest control workshops in Otago and Southland

Vodafone New Zealand Foundation

"World of Difference" winners Margaret Suman and Anita Pillai managing the Trust's Nursery.



Contact Energy "Community Challenge" winner. Some of this money will fund the first year of our cat predation study on Stewart Island.

Otago Regional Council

continues to assist with funding of wetland restoration at our Tavora Reserve.

www.yellow-eyed-penguin.org.nz

YEPT

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Fantastic Field Days

Again this year the Trust's planting projects have been well supported by the public and volunteers.



Okia plaque

A plaque commemorating previous owners of the Okia Reserve (now jointly owned by the Trust and the Dunedin City Council) was unveiled on 3 August 2003. This event became part of the Trust's Conservation Week activities as it fitted in well with this year's theme: "*Our*



Dick and Clearwater families commemorate their past association with Okia.

Places – Our Stories: Nga whakanikoniko o te Ao Tamhito seeks to remind us of the culture and lifestyles of the people who came before us and have shaped the country we live in today." The day began with our Patron, Lady Beverley Reeves joining us in planting seedlings for the future as part of the stabilisation programme on the Margaret Hazel Slope.

Others joined the planters for a guided walk along the less well known back of the Reserve. Points of interest concentrated on the signs of changes through time, from the volcanic action that formed the Pyramids to the natural revegetation progression that

now gives a bracken home to fernbirds and will in the future form forests.

Members of the Dick and the Clearwater families who previously farmed the area joined representatives from the Trust, the Dunedin City Council and the Department of Conservation to plant seedlings around the plaque which is near the site of a former homestead.



Trustee Pat Mark (left) and Lady Reeves (right)

Tavora June 8th



Eve de Burgh-Thomas, Celia Reid, and India Davids plant a cabbage tree at Tavora.

Forest and Bird members, the Department of Conservation volunteer group, members of New Zealand Ecological Network and farming neighbours. A marquee, provided by the Otago Regional Council was the base

What a day it was! Under gloomy skies but with a light and happy atmosphere some forty adults and seventeen children gathered at Tavora to plant a variety of native species along the river bank and in the dunes. A number of groups were represented including the junior

DoC Otago Technical Services Unit helps out at Tavora

For the second year it was great to have the TSU staff at Tavora Reserve as part of their team building day. They helped build a forest, improve the state of the dunes and the banks of the creek. With over 200 plants in the ground, twelve Department of Conservation staff, Trust representatives and two volunteers retired to Graham Thurlow's woolshed where a great lunch was enjoyed by all. Post lunch activities included more planting. Thanks to the DoC TSU unit again this year.

for operations. This marquee was a boon as around noon it began to rain. It rained heavily but the planting gangs carried on and finished the task. The rain and careful planting have ensured success and those plants look great.

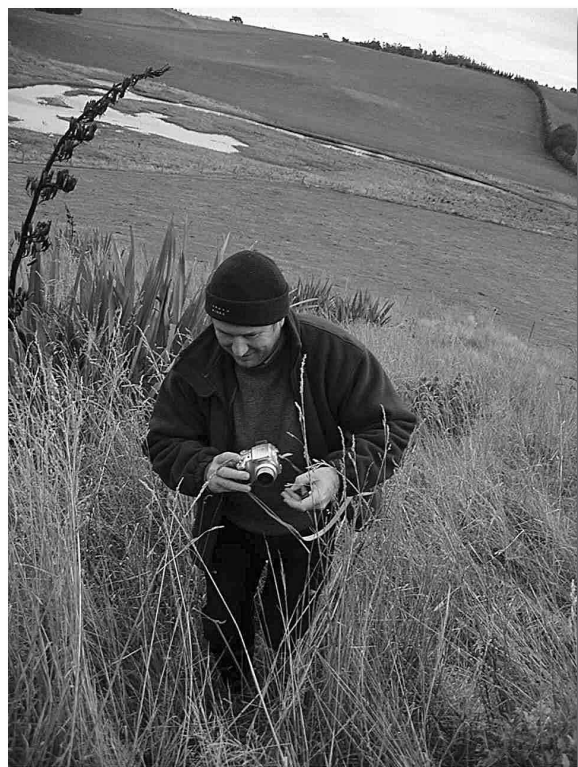
Banrock Station visit to Tavora

Banrock Station Wines (one of the biggest selling wine brands in New Zealand) is recognized globally for its donation towards restoration and rehabilitation of wetlands throughout the world, including New Zealand. Part proceeds from the sale of every Banrock Station bottle or cask contributes to these wetland projects – 40 in Australasia alone!

In July, Trust staff and Trustees (Peter Simkins, David Blair, and Margaret Murrell) hosted Banrock Station Wines Manager, Tony Sharley, and his assistants, “Sharley’s Angels,” from the Nobile Wine Group at the Tavora wetland. They walked the length of the creek, inspected the rare plants growing on the dunes, then up the headland track to get an overview of the wetland and the area that the Trust has planted since buying the neatly cropped paddock eight years ago. The saltmarsh now has a variety of plants looking like a multi-coloured carpet, with several rush species and a floating fern, Azolla

rubra, which were all inspected and photographed. The first trees planted, all locally sourced, are now a respectable height, some a metre and a half to two metres tall. It was a delight to see our treasures through other eyes.

In the evening Tony presented a public seminar on these restoration projects – and of course attendees were able to taste and purchase Banrock wines during the event!



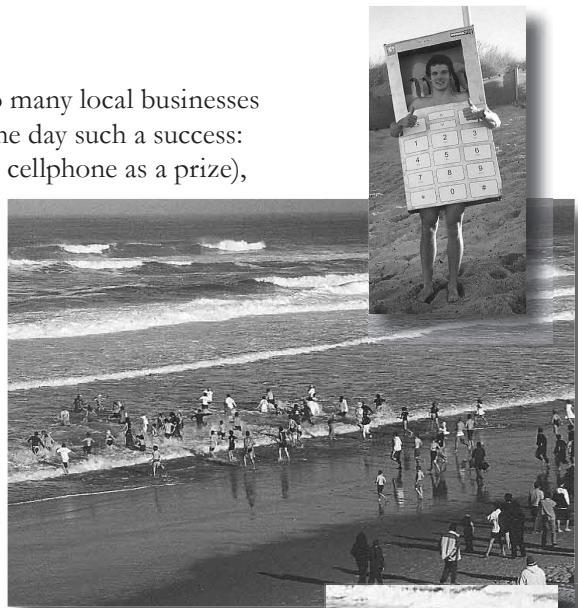
Tony Sharley of Banrock Station Wines

Polar Plunge

For some it was the shortest day of the year, for others, it was possibly the coldest day of their lives. Local radio station, 98 More FM and the Trust organised a mid-winter Polar Plunge at a local beach. Dunedin pulled an absolute stunner with the weather and approximately 500 people turned up. One unexpected visitor was a female sealion who delayed the start of the event for those brave enough to get into the water!

98 More FM’s Gary McCormack joined plungers who took to the water in an array of costumes whilst the younger ones entered the ‘Big Dig’ in the sand. Those with some sanity soaked up the sunshine as spectators!

A big thank you to many local businesses involved in making the day such a success: First Mobile (a \$1000 cellphone as a prize), The Warehouse (prizes for the Big Dig), The St Kilda Surf Lifesaving Club (lifeguards), Southern Spas and Pools (Gary’s spa), Tulloch’s Transport (truck and driver), Pine Hill School (hot dogs) and Bell Tea.



Trust welcomes new ranger

The Trust is delighted to announce the appointment of David McFarlane to the position of Ranger. This position is being funded from the Biodiversity Condition fund.

Originally trained as a Librarian, David has always had a great interest in conservation and his latter years of employment have reflected this interest. Since 1997 David has co-ordinated the Dunedin Branch - Forest & Bird Wilding Tree Team, eradicating wilding trees from areas of conservation value in Otago/Southland. More recently he has worked on the F&B Otanomomo Forest Restoration Project near Balclutha; both positions have involved working closely with many community groups and volunteers. David has also worked for the Coastal Otago Area Office, Department of Conservation undertaking field work, including weed and pest control, track and facilities maintenance and community relations contracts.

We are delighted to welcome David to the team.



Great crowd and great weather for the Dunedin Polar Plunge

The Trust has so many people and organisations to thank!

YEPT Receives Biodiversity Funding

In July this year the Trust was delighted to learn that its applications for funds from the Biodiversity Fund administered by the Department of Conservation was successful. The fund was established to protect and enhance biodiversity of native species on private land. This year there were unprecedented applications to the fund many of which were of an exceptionally high standard making the competition for our projects very intense.

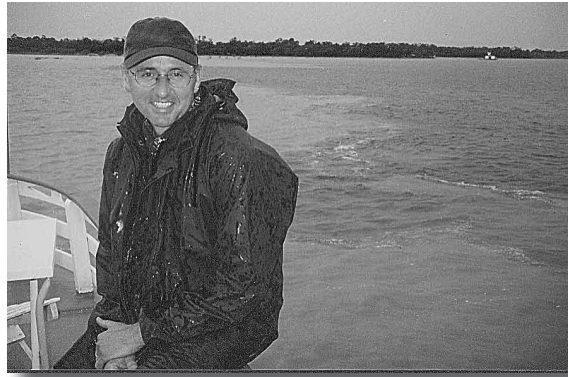
Despite the stiff competition the Trust was awarded virtually all the funding it had sought (\$218,000 of which the Trust has to match dollar for dollar) and we are looking forward to some exciting and productive years ahead. Although the Trust exists for the protection and enhancement of yellow-eyed penguin populations everything we do to improve their habitat also enhances the biodiversity of the other native species of the area.

We believe that we have been so successful with this funding because we have a proven track record not only in the fields of habitat restoration and predator trapping but we also have the infrastructure and networks necessary to carry out the work. We can do the job and the money will be well spent.

A brief summary of the projects applied for are:

1. Biodiversity Condition Fund "Game Keeper Service"

The Trust is now fortunate enough to be able to employ a full-time field operator working to maintain the revegetation programme and predator control work on all the reserves that we



YEPT Ranger, David McFarlane

have involvement with. This will be the first time the Trust will have an employee who will work exclusively in this role and that means we can do so much more.

The term "Game Keeper" has been replaced with "Ranger" to reflect the duties other than predator control (for example weed control and revegetation) that the Ranger will carry out.

This position has already been advertised

and a Ranger appointed. There was an overwhelming response to the position with over 50 applications, many from very qualified people. We were in the fortunate position to be able to choose the perfect ranger and we look forward to David McFarlane starting in mid October. Again we are committed to the position for 3 years. The employment of David will result in a huge expansion in our revegetation programme and greater predator protection for the penguins than they have ever had.

Having a Ranger "on site" most days of the week will give the Trust a greater chance to interact with people visiting the reserves with greater opportunities for education and advocacy. We expect that with this increased attention the biodiversity on our reserves and adjacent areas will flourish and form a model of what can be achieved with a little effort.

2. Biodiversity Advice Fund

a. Biodiversity Advisory Service

We now have funding for our Projects Officer (David Blair) to visit and talk to private landowners on a regular basis about how best to maintain biodiversity and enhance natural biodiversity on their land within the yellow-eyed penguin breeding range.

CONTINUED PAGE 6



YEPT Projects Officer

Principal sponsor

Mainland – Proudly Supporting the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust

Mainland Products Ltd. has been the major sponsor of the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust since 1990. Over this time Mainland has contributed in excess of \$1 million in financial aid and support, and these funds have been instrumental in turning around the decline of the yellow-eyed penguin population.

Mainland is proud of the association with the Trust and looks forward to assisting the Trust in their endeavours to protect the yellow-eyed penguin habitat in the years to come.

Help us with this worthwhile cause by collecting Mainland Cheese barcodes. Call 0800 CHEESE to obtain your wallchart with



Additional sponsors



In 1989 Cooke Howlison Toyota loaned the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust a Toyota Hilux 4x4 utility. Testament to the quality of Toyota and the maintenance team at Cooke Howlison Toyota, it continues to run as good as new. The logos of both the Trust and Cooke Howlison Toyota have recently been repainted providing

Cooke Howlison Toyota

important public awareness for both organizations. Many of the Trust's reserves are in remote places which can only be accessed by four-wheel drive. This tough work horse gives us no problem delivering heavy fencing equipment and trees to these sites.

Canon NZ Ltd

Have supplied and serviced a photo-copier

Otago Regional Council funding

Our East Otago Reserve, Tavora, has again been recognised by the Otago Regional Council. In their latest biodiversity funding round they purchased herbicides to assist in the control of marram grass in the dune area. As part of the broader biodiversity work in the dune system, the Trust hopes to eliminate the exotic marram grass and reintroduce native species.



Otago Regional Council

will also provide financial assistance to produce signage that will inform the public about the dune restoration.

In 2002 the Otago Regional Council provided funding for improving the walkway in the area, enlarging the carpark and other interpretive signage. We are again extremely grateful to them for this further assistance to enhance this spectacular reserve.

The Otago Regional Council



Projects Officer, David Blair



the island. Contact Energy's initiative to involve their consumers in worthy causes during a time of power crisis is to be applauded. The Trust is extremely grateful for this unexpected donation.

Contact Energy donation



The Trust was overjoyed when electricity retailer Contact Energy recently donated \$50,000 to them. As part of Contact Energy's 'Community Conservation Challenge' Dunedin consumers achieved 10% electricity savings. A total of \$400,000 was donated to 5 local charities.

Sincere thanks to Dunedin South MP David Benson-Pope for nominating the Trust as a potential recipient.

The Trust has allocated this donation to initially fund and underwrite further research on Stewart Island - in particular to investigate the effect of cats on the yellow-eyed penguins breeding on

Vodafone New Zealand Foundation Winners "Two for the price of One!"



Passionate about plants – Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust nursery workers Margaret Suman and Anita Pillai have received funding from Vodafone New Zealand Foundation for 2004. They entered the "World of Difference" competition with the hope of securing one years funding for their salaries and expenses to continue their work at the Trust's Nursery.



As one of the eight national finalists selected from over 300 entries, of which only four would receive funding, it was a very anxious wait to hear the judges' final decision. Securing this funding means that Anita and Margaret can continue with their roles as co-managers of the Nursery and receive payment for it. They had volunteered one year of their time to propagate the plants required for the penguin habitats after the Nursery manager retired at the end of 2002. Funding restraints meant the Trust could not afford to replace him until external funding was found. Both are qualified in horticulture and botany and have huge job satisfaction from this work and supporting a worthy cause.

The Trust is indebted to Anita and Margaret for their passion which has won the funding for both them and the Trust – one judge was in awe by the comment "People, plants and penguins".

And the Trust is indebted to Vodafone New Zealand Foundation for recognising this passion and awarding it to Margaret and Anita. We look forward to an exciting year working alongside Vodafone New Zealand Foundation and the Nursery co-managers.

for free for the last ten years.

speakers at a variety of our functions.

Downie Stewart our Solicitors have donated their time since the Trust's inception 16 years ago.

Advertising and Art Provides the graphic design and artwork for our stationery, promotional material and other publications.

Television production company **NHNZ** (Natural History New Zealand) regularly donates funds, has supplied images for a local TV commercial, services our computers and provides guest

Penguin Patch A tourist information centre in Dunedin has also worked closely with us on a number of promotional products as well as supplying funds from a donation box.

Funding for Trust CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4



With everyone focussed on the receiving of all the grants and exciting

new projects ahead, we also acknowledge the hours of preparation in putting together all the grant applications and all the work now required in administering, accounting and organising all the new projects. A big thank you must go to our Executive Officer, Sue Murray, for the work she has done and the mountain of work ahead.

David will also be responsible for collecting information for the publication of 4 booklets (landowner's handbook, coastal revegetation, penguin monitoring and the reprint and updating of the mustelid trapping handbook).

This will be the first time since the Projects Officer position was created that we will be able to fully utilize the specialist skills of David on a full-time basis. The project has been funded for 3 years so the Advice Service will be available for at least this length of time but we consider community/landowner involvement in protection of biodiversity so important that we would expect the position to continue beyond the 3 year expiry date. Of course we will have to find further funds.

b. Predator Control Support

Following on from the very successful Mustelid Trapping Workshop the Trust ran in 2001 we have applied and secured money to repeat the workshop many more times in local communities within the yellow-eyed penguin breeding range over the next 3 years.

As part of the trapping workshop programme the Trust intends to retain regular contact with the participants of the workshops who become involved in trapping mustelids and collect their data. The outcome of this contact is to build up information on the efficiency of trapping methods so that "best

practice" trapping methods can be constantly revised and improved. This in return will be relayed back to participants in the trapping programme.

Unfortunately our bid to have trap library funded was unsuccessful. The library is an integral follow on from the trapping workshops so we are pursuing further grants to supply these.

These are exciting times for the Trust. Through the Biodiversity Fund for Private Landowners we will be able to put in place projects and programmes and achieve protection of native species that other conservation organizations can only dream about.

We consider ourselves extremely lucky but there is one SNAG! The Biodiversity Fund will only pay up to a maximum of 50% of the costs. Therefore it is up to the Trust to find the shortfall of \$218,000. We are going to do this by making applications to other organizations for the remainder and rearranging the work structure that we are already committed to. To accept the Biodiversity money we have to do all that we applied for even if it wasn't fully funded and we will. Your help would also be appreciated.

The Trust acknowledges the considerable effort put in to this funding application by Peter Simkins, Anita Pillai and Sue Murray.

RESEARCH



Rockhopper



Magellanic

Falkland Island penguins

Mike Bingham, *Environmental Research Unit, Falkland Islands*

Penguin populations in the Falkland Islands have suffered major declines over the last 15 to 20 years, since the establishment of a commercial fishing industry. Rockhopper and Magellanic penguins have declined by 90% and 80% respectively.

Comparisons with neighbouring Magellanic penguin colonies in Chile have shown that adult penguins in the Falklands take over twice as long to gather food for their chicks as their neighbours in Chile, where penguins are protected by no-fishing zones. As a result chick survival in the Falklands is less than 0.7 chicks per nest, whilst in Chile the average is double at 1.4 chicks per nest.

Even those chicks which do fledge in the Falklands stand little chance of surviving their first year. Average fledging weight in Chile is 3.6 kg, whilst in the Falklands average fledging weight is less than 2.7kg. As a result juvenile survival in the Falklands is almost zero, with

lack of regeneration leading to population decline.

In September 2000, the Spheniscus Penguin Conservation Workshop, comprised of penguin conservation organisations from around the world, called on the Falkland Islands Government to protect penguins from industrial fishing through the introduction of fishing exclusion zones.

Chile and Argentina both protect penguin colonies with no-fishing zones, and their colonies are healthy, despite their close proximity to the Falklands. However the Falklands Government has refused to adopt such protection, despite public opinion. The Falklands' economy is almost entirely dependent on revenue from commercial fishing. However no-fishing zones would only reduce available fishing grounds by around 5%.

For further details see Bingham 2002 - *The decline of Falkland Islands penguins in the presence of a commercial fishing industry*. Revista Chilena 75: 805-818 or visit the web sites www.falklands.net, www.seabirds.org or www.penguins.cl



Mark Rowe, a wildlife journalist in the United Kingdom, ran the London Marathon to raise money for the penguins - and he wore a Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust tee-shirt! Here is his story....

It was my first marathon, though I've always kept myself reasonably fit since I left school and have run a couple of half-marathons. I ran this one in four hours and three minutes. It was a hot day in April, but also a really enjoyable one as there is so much camaraderie among runners and the crowds line the whole course cheering everybody on. It was remarkably easy in the end, it's just a long, slow run - you just have to eat nothing but pasta and treacle pudding for two months to build up the energy and stamina!

Why run for the yellow-eyed penguins?

My wife and I visited the Otago Peninsula and Bushy Beach Reserve at Oamaru back in February and were incredibly moved by these wonderful creatures. They seem so vulnerable. We've been lucky enough to get to Antarctica where you see millions of penguins. If some species such as gentoos or adelic penguins take a hit, the species lives on. The yellow-eyed penguins are so small in number that a single disaster could wipe them out. This seemed a way in which I could really make a difference.

In the UK, if you raise money for a large charity it often just disappears into a black hole of administration costs. This time, I was able to tell my sponsors that every penny they gave me would go directly to benefit the penguins.

The wider world needs to understand the plight of the yellow-eyed penguin. It's not rocket science - loss of habitat to farming and huge fishing vessels that vacuum up the sea, taking the penguins as by-catch are mostly to blame. Address these issues and the yellow-eyed penguin has a future. The more people who learn about this and are moved to campaign and act, the more secure the yellow-eyed penguin becomes.

The Trust sincerely thanks Mark for his generous donation to the Trust, and we know he also made a donation from the marathon to the work done by Jim Caldwell at Bushy Beach Reserve. Mark challenges other members of the Trust and their friends and families to do something like this to raise money for the penguins. Thank you Mark.



Mark at finishing line wearing his YEPT t-shirt

The Thurlow's

Graham and Sherry Thurlow lease the non-covenanted area of our Tavora Reserve in East Otago. In 1993 the Trust purchased this 40 hectare block of coastal land to protect the yellow-eyed penguins breeding in the area. The coastal strip of 12 hectares was secured by a Department of Conservation covenant as a wildlife habitat, and the remaining 28 hectares are mainly farmed. The focus of the covenant is restoration of habitat for the small number of yellow-eyed penguins breeding in the area.

Graham and Sherry have become caretakers of our Reserve, assisting the Trust with the many developmental tasks undertaken in the area over the years. This area is open to the public and



during the summer months Graham can be seen mowing the walking track from the carpark to the beach to enable recreational users an easier access way. Planting days, fencing, weed control, spraying, track maintenance, removing the odd wandering stock, pest control and penguin monitoring are just a few of the tasks willingly undertaken by this couple. Their house is often used as a meeting place, and their woolshed has been known to convert into a barbeque area on a Trust working day when the weather has turned sour!

The Trust truly values this wonderful couple both as lessees and as volunteers. Their friendly welcoming manner, and constant support with the multitude of tasks is greatly appreciated by us all. Thank you Graham and Sherry.

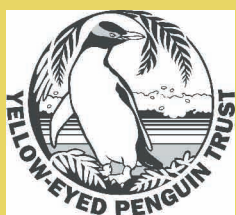
TIPS FOR VIEWING YELLOW-EYED PENGUINS

Everybody needs to be mindful of the need to vacate beaches when adult yellow-eyed penguins are feeding chicks during the breeding season and adhere to the guidelines:

- 1 Hide so the penguins can't see you**
- 2 Talk quietly and move slowly**
- 3 Don't bring your dog**
- 4 Keep to the track**

Thank you to:

Nursery supporters
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Karen Wilson
Donna Woodley
Jean Woods
James Woods



DENIS PATERSON

Please remember us in your Will

Managing and/or purchasing penguin breeding habitat and controlling predators such as stoats and ferrets are some of our ongoing tasks.

Saving the yellow-eyed penguin is a long-term task.

Bequests will help secure its survival.

Please remember us in your Will.

News in Brief

Ecology gets an attention boost with Pacific Ecologist magazine

A new quarterly journal published in Wellington, and focussing on the vital issues of ecology, justice and sustainability in Australasia and the Pacific.

For more information:
www.prim.org.nz

SANCCOB

SANCCOB, a non profit organization based in Cape Town, South Africa, which cares for indigenous injured, ill and oiled seabirds has an excellent website at:
www.sanccob.co.za/index.htm



Annual General Meeting

Date and Time: Tuesday 25

November 2003, 7:30pm

Venue: Otago Art Society Rooms,
cnr Great King St and Albany St,
Dunedin

Guest Speaker: Alison Balance - NHNZ
Saving Asia's Wild Tigers

Yellow-eyed Penguin Annual Symposium

We were delighted to welcome our Patron, Beverley, Lady Reeves, to the Annual Yellow-eyed Penguin Symposium in August. The morning session was a summary of the years' penguin happenings. The penguin breeding numbers were down about 30% on the 2001- 2002 figures. Speakers in the afternoon presented topics about 'Penguins on Land', including research from the popular tourist destination, Sandfly Bay, showing that management systems that worked for the visitor numbers 20 years ago are not functional now. Nearly fifty people attended the Symposium including University staff and student researchers, volunteers, landowners, tour operators, Department of Conservation staff and Trust Board members and staff.

Don't forget to visit our website...

www.yellow-eyedpenguin.org.nz

Office move

The Trust Office has moved! But not far - just a few metres down the corridor still on the third floor, but nearer the top of the stairs and nearer the lift! Address and phone numbers are unchanged.

The new Office has more space with 3 separate work areas, compared to only one in the old office, extra storage space, and a display area at the front foyer. Please feel free to visit - usual Office hours are 8:30am - 2:30pm.

Kids Page

Hey kids, as you may have noticed, there is no Kids Page this issue. There was so much going on, we didn't have time to put one together. We promise to make up for it in the next newsletter coming out in May 2004. We look forward to any new artwork or stories you would like to send us for possible publication. Just post it to:

The Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust
PO Box 5409
Dunedin

Reminder:

Receipts for donations/subscriptions are posted out with the newsletter in May and November. Should you require your receipt earlier, please send a sae with your payment.

WANTED:
OFFICE VOLUNTEER
to assist Sue with mainly the banking and receipting. One morning per week minimum. Ring the Trust Office for more information.
479 0011

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