



FRIENDS OF MANA ISLAND INCORPORATED

PO BOX 54 101, MANA

Newsletter Number 21

September 2004

Hi

The weather gods (goddesses I think) have not treated us at all kindly this year. Whilst we again only got less than half the planned planting trips away, the weather was pretty miserable, and cancellations made volunteers a bit committal-shy. That and some less than full trips and less than productive planters have meant that we did not achieve our target of 15,000 trees in the ground. We did try to get more trees in the ground for a week in August with a combination of contract planters and voluntary workers and even that ended prematurely, but was great in terms of results. Thanks to those who made it happen.

Kakariki monitoring is another activity which has been affected by the weather, but the feedback is really positive and it is the time of the year for the birds and the bees to do their stuff, so we should see some activity around the condominiums provided.

We are looking forward now to the next project, and hopefully the two Colin's will be preparing budgets and plans to carry the restoration plan forward next year.

We have two trips arranged for the summer, weed pulling and control, the last Saturday in both November and February. There are also smaller groups for bird monitoring on a monthly basis into next year. Volunteers are always welcome for these activities, and the November and February trips are ideal for sponsor participation as well.

The theory is that the grotty winter is a portent of a good summer (let's hope so) but a dry one (that's not so good). At least the remaining root trainers can be bagged up for next year.

Let us hope that the weather predictions are not correct, and we do enjoy a wonderful summer without the fire risk which so often accompanies it. We sure deserve it.

Cheers
Brian

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES 2004/5

Places available for seven people -

Nursery Work

September	18/19	October	16/17	December	4/5
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Fairy Prion and Yellow Crowned Parakeet monitoring

October	2/3	November	6/7	December	11/12
January	8/9	February	12/13	March	12/13

Places available for 30 people -

Weed pulling and control

November 27	February 26
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For more information, email: contactus@manaisland.org.nz

News from the Island

In July Jason was pleased to welcome Tony Henry to the Island as Assistant Ranger.

Work continued apace. Grant, Rex and Nio collected kohekohe seeds on the mainland, took them back to Mana and spread them under existing plants in the hope that they will germinate and one day establish a forest canopy.

Rex removed all the plant tubes from last season's plantings. He finished his contract on Mana then left for the Chathams.

Nio assisted Jason with written reports due in at this time of the year.

Jason spent some time in the boat carting new culverts which should be installed soon.

All staff helped with the planting days when the weather allowed volunteers to get out to the Island.

July saw everyone go down with the flu. The only good thing was that it went through staff one

at a time so it didn't affect Island operations

Despite hold-ups with the weather, the roofing contractor finished replacing the woolshed roof and it looks great. This was an urgent job because some days there was more water inside than out! The building is now bird-proof and waterproof. Funding for this replacement was made possible from last years Historic Funding Package from Government.

All the covers for the Brown Teal were repaired so that the birds had some hiding places on the water away from air-borne predators. About 17 birds were seen around the ponds while repairs were being done.

June saw the return of two Kereru who had been absent for three months. They are as happy as ever in the Kowhai again.

A NZ Falcon was spotted flying around. It has been about seven years since a Falcon was seen on the Island. Let's hope he is not eating the Kakariki.

July was a very productive month with FOMI doing the monitoring of the Kakariki. The birds seem to be losing their fear of humans and are staying in one spot even when people get quite close. This has made it easier to get good band-sightings (a difficult job as the birds have short legs). There are now a total of thirteen different band combinations from the twenty six released birds. Mana obviously suits them and the hope is that they start nesting within the next few weeks. Future trips will focus on checking nesting boxes for signs of occupancy.,

Takahe monitoring has also taken place. All of last season's chicks were caught for sexing and banding - three females and one male. Altogether there are now 15 female and 16 male Takahe on the Island.

A few other birds were also caught for re-banding and a general health check. Most birds were in good condition and had put on weight since their last check.

Jason

Readers may remember mention being made in the last two Newsletters about Tiritiri Matangi - the island situated 4km off the coast of Auckland's Whangaparaoa Peninsula. It has many similarities to Mana, in fact Jason and Ian Cooksley (DoC) went there recently to check out how the place is managed and the part that the Supporters play.

A book has just been published and we are able to offer this to members for \$35.95 including postage and packing. Order your copy now from contactus@manaisland.org.nz

TIRITIRI MATANGI
A Model of Conservation
by Anne Rimmer
A Definitive History of the Island

Mana Island History

Mana Island has had three names in its known history: Te-Mana-o-Kupe-ki-Aotearoa (or Mana Island), Table Island and Warspite Island.

It is a significant historical site because of its location and because of the important groups of people who have inhabited it. Restoration of the Island's vegetation and wildlife gives us a new opportunity to re-examine its past.

The record of Mana Island's history before contact with European whalers, sealers and explorers in the early 1800's is incomplete. Various Maori oral histories about Mana Island, particularly those featuring Kupe the explorer, have survived into the contemporary era. Archaeological explorations have indicated that Maori were living on the Island as early as 1500 and some say Mana was inhabited as early as 1300. Ngati Toa, a large and influential Maori iwi, occupied the Island from about 1820.

The 1840's to 1860's were a very busy era for the Kapiti Coast area, including Mana Island. Whaling, exploring and trading for land were the main activities of the time and Mana Island was a significant site for all three. The Treaty of Waitangi was signed off its shores and Mana Island was a contended piece of land in one of the first Old Land Courts - under the Spain Commission.

Farming has also been a significant part of Mana Island's history. John Bell ran what is regarded as New Zealand's first European farm on Mana, beginning as early as 1832. Just as Mana was a source of crops for the Ngati Toa, it was also a viable sheep, cattle and even tobacco farm under later management. Private farming only ceased on Mana Island in 1973.

Ecological restoration is now the main focus of activity on Mana Island but Mana's archaeological treasures are being preserved alongside the restoration of its flora and fauna.

Source: Mana Island Bibliography – Amy Watling

Mana – The People's Island

Statistics, statistics and more statistics!

Over the years, hundreds if not thousands of people have been actively involved in the restoration of Mana Island, through contributions of time, expertise, materials and/or money.

Jobs have included - beach clean-ups, concrete gannet colony/sound system, construction of yellow crowned parakeet breeding boxes, establishment of FOMI, general restoration, Green Gecko & Whitakers Skink searches, Interpretation Panels, Lockwood refurbishment, monitoring projects (birds, skinks, plantings, gold striped gecko), mouse eradication, Nursery (expansion of building, genral work), old farm fence removal, oral history, species transfers (Lizards, Fairy Prions, Yellow Crowned Parakeets, Diving Petrels, Speckled Skinks), surveys (plant & plots), tree planting, tube pulling, weeding, Wetland restoration, Woolshed (restoration of building & shearing machines), solar powered lighting system.

Groups and Organisations who have helped - 1990 Commission, Aquaheat Industries Ltd, Bright Industries Ltd, Bright's Hardware, Carter Holt Harvey, Department of Corrections, Ducks Unlimited, Firth Industries, Forest & Bird, FOMI, Gary Thompson Contracting, Global Volunteer Network, local gaming machine trusts, local schools, Lottery Grants Board, Mana Community Trust, Ngati Toa, NZ Botanical Society, NZ Conservation Corps, NZ Herpetological Society, NZ Hydrological Society, NZ Vintage Machinery Society, Ornithological Society, Pacific Development Trust, Pak 'n' Save Porirua, Plimmerton Historical Society, RC Bruce Trust, RD Evans Trust, Shell Chemicals, Stout Trust, Tararua Tramping Club, The Rotary Club of Kapi Mana, Tindall Foundation, Victoria University, Wellington Community Trust, WWF and of course all the wonderful individual volunteers!

Colin Ryder

Introducing New People



Tony Henry is now working as assistant Ranger on Mana Island. Tony is a local lad, born in Tawa but now based in the Wairarapa (when he's not on the Island of course).

He has been coming and going on the Island since 1997, doing various jobs - weeding, planting and filling in for staff when they were away. In between times he has done some island restoration work overseas, on Pitcairn Island, Ascension Island and New Caledonia.

He will be in charge when Jason is away in September.



Amy Watling is a postgraduate student at Victoria University of Wellington in Library and Information Science, and she has been working on the Mana Island Bibliography for about 9 months. The Bibliography is a guide to resources that contain information about Mana Island before 1973 - in other words, before involvement by government departments. Amy says she has learned a lot about Mana and the Kapiti Coast during this project, and she has also had the opportunity to visit the Island, which she loved! She hopes that FOMI, the Department of Conservation, and all those interested in the history of Mana Island will find the bibliography useful.

Well-known Mana Island Ranger, Jason Christensen is to be seconded for six weeks from the 21 September. He's off to the Area Office at Waikanae. Wonder if he'll wear a tie?

The emphasis of the revegetation programme is on recreating plant communities appropriate to the Island's location, climate, soils and landforms. Seed is collected on the Island or on the adjacent coast (all within Cook Strait Ecological District). All seed is collected from sites below 200m and from areas with similar soils to those of Mana Island. Mainland seed sources are used only if the species does not occur on Mana Island. Most seed is germinated off the Island and the seedlings returned to the Island, where they are pricked out and raised for a further 1 - 2 years before being planted out.

Source: DoC Mana Island Ecological Restoration Plan

This space is yours!

Ideas, suggestions, articles, correspondence, photographs or irrelevant nonsense for the Newsletter are always welcome.

Please flood your contributions to contactus@manaisland.org.nz

Your Committee: Brian Paget (President), Doreen Douglas (VP & Newsletter), Kelvin Hunt (Secretary), Janet Barnes (Treasurer), Colin Ryder, Dave Adams, Vicky Froude, Tama Coker (Iwi Rep), Aka Arthur (Iwi Rep), Ian Cooksley (DoC), Jason Christensen (DoC),