



NEW ZEALAND
FAIRY TERN
CHARITABLE TRUST
TARA-ITI

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Dear Members,

In this issue: Fairy tern news; Wharf threat; Raffle winners; Environmental Awards; Thanks; Te Arai Stream dam; Join us; More on Te Arai Stream.

First, welcome to new members: Dug Stuart of Hamilton, Michelle Galvin of Waikanae Beach, Hamish Cameron and family of Temuka, Heidi Mulligan of Mangawhai, Maxine Suvalko and family of Ruakaka, Mia Macartney of Waipu

Fairy Tern News

At this time of the year and throughout Winter, all of New Zealand's fairy terns are over on the Kaipara Harbour. All 35 to 40 of them. Sometimes most of them can be seen snoozing at high tide with heads tucked away completely relaxed. At other times they spread out over the mighty Kaipara and forage for food diving in the small rivulets when the tide is quite low, for the tiny fish they enjoy.

Now and then one or two may fly over to the east coast for a day trip to check out the breeding sites. The males especially jealously guard the territory they regard as their own for future courtship and nesting areas with their chosen female. They will be back in spring to scrap over their spot and woo the females again!

Trappers are now back in action after a break during the lockdown.



Preparations for next season are underway, with DOC carrying out rat eradication on the Waipu and Mangawhai Sandspits. They are also looking into doing some shell enhancement at Mangawhai, Te Arai, Pakiri and Papakanui, with help from the Defence Force at Papakanui.

6 June: During the Birds NZ wader count 27 fairy terns were seen roosting at Bird Island in the Kaipara Harbour.

The Te Arai Juvenile at the Kaipara Harbour 13.3.20

Photo: Darren Markin

Wharf threat to our bird

A group in Mangawhai has applied for resource consent to build a wharf by the pub in Mangawhai. Unfortunately, the site is one of the most productive foraging sites for fairy terns and would be right in the centre of where three birds' territories converge. One of the most successful males has a well defended patch right in front of the pub. With fewer than 40 birds surviving and Mangawhai being the most successful breeding area every part of the harbour is so important.

The feeding areas of other rare native and migratory birds would also be at risk.

There are serious concerns about the potential adverse effects on fairy terns if this wharf goes ahead.

Please make a submission to the Northern Regional Council opposing the application. The Trust will certainly lodge a submission, but a large number from individuals is very effective.

Follow the link below:

<https://www.nrc.govt.nz/consents/notified-resource-consents/mangawhai-historic-wharf-trust/>

Submissions need to be in by June 23

Darren Markin took this photo in front of the tavern on 26th October 2019. He comments:

“M-R and R-KM were often seen there, below the Tavern. Fishing along the low tide waterway and sitting on the wet sand FAR TOO NEAR where this wharf thinks it’s going !!!!”



Raffle winners

Congratulations to the winners of our raffle which was drawn on 29th February at Mangawhai museum under the supervision of the J.P. on duty, Roy Faris.

Pictured left is first prize winner, Brad Walter of Herne Bay, Auckland, who had been holidaying in Mangawhai when he bought his winning ticket. He was delighted to receive his prize which was presented to him by our secretary, Joy Wilson.



David Mather of Mangawhai won the second prize. He is pictured right with his wife, Glenys.



Silvia Insley of Kaiwaka, pictured left, winner of the third prize.

Calendar coming:

After our very popular 2019 calendar, we had so many people asking about another one that we've decided to do one for next year. We'll keep you posted.

Environmental Awards - Northern Regional Council

About Tern, the volunteer group who monitor fairy terns at Mangawhai and Waipu, have been nominated for this award. Because of the Covid 19 lockdown, announcement of the winners has been delayed, but is expected soon.

Extracts from the nomination:

About Tern is a group of volunteers whose main purpose is to work with the Department of Conservation (DOC) to help the NZ Fairy Tern survive in New Zealand. The NZ Fairy Tern is the rarest endemic breeding bird in NZ with a current population of fewer than 40 birds and has teetered on the brink of extinction since the 1970s. The population plummeted to 3 pairs in 1984 but has increased slowly since then due to the introduction of DOC wardens and volunteers. About Tern is the volunteer group which works at Waipu and Mangawhai, assisting with predator control and monitoring the birds in the breeding season.



***About Tern Mangawhai* volunteers return from the Sandspit March 2020.**

About Tern volunteers assist DOC in erecting fences around the breeding sites in September, which they then remove at the end of the breeding season. Volunteers work in pairs and spend 8 to 12 hours per week on the Mangawhai and Waipu Spits, in all weathers, monitoring the birds. Binoculars and telescopes are used, and detailed notes are taken which are forwarded to other members of the group and the DOC rangers.

The work the About Tern volunteers do on the Waipu and Mangawhai Sandspit Wildlife Refuges protects not only the NZ fairy tern but also other rare and endangered bird species such as the Northern New Zealand dotterel, the Caspian tern, the banded dotterel and the pied stilt. Migrant bird species such as the bar tailed godwits, red knots and turnstones also benefit from their protection work. Their contribution to Northland's biodiversity cannot be overstated.

Thanks.....

.....to **generous donations from:** loyal member, **Sheila Coombs**, visitors from the U.S., **Myrlene Staten** and **Richard Teig**, the **Greenstone Shop** in Christchurch, **Tumbleweed Tees** in Wellington and the **Pipi Gallery** in Mangawhai, we are staying afloat – just!

..... to **Price Baker Berridge**, the law firm assisting us with legal attempts to have the illegal dam on Te Arai Stream removed. They have been extremely generous, as the funding from the Environmental Legal assistance Fund will only cover some of their costs.

Left: ceramic fairy terns at Pipi Gallery, Mangawhai



Te Arai Stream dam

It is disappointing to have to report that most of the illegal dam on Te Arai Stream and the supporting rock walls are still there, as is the container for the pumping station.

Part of the dam was removed in January as reported in our previous newsletter and the rest of the dam and walls were supposed to be removed by the 5th June by order of the Environment Court. There have been some delays because the mouth of the stream was blocked, causing flooding at the dam site, but heavy rainfall has increased stream flow so that the mouth is open to the sea and has been for at least the last two weeks..

The builders of the dam, Te Arai North Limited (TANL) have persuaded the Department of Conservation (DOC) and Land Information New Zealand (LINZ) that the remaining removal processes are conditional on their receiving permissions and easements for a bridge over the stream so that residents in their subdivision south of the stream can drive through the reserve land to the golf course, instead of having to use the public road nearby.

TANL appear to be delaying removal until the bridge over the stream is in place. As the consent from DOC states that dam and walls must be removed before the bridge can be installed this is a surprise. (*See the actual conditions quoted below*) The new deadline is now the 31st August 2020, so hopefully there is enough water flow for the spring spawning to happen. If not, this would be the third fish spawning since the Trust began the Environment Court action to remove the illegal dam and surrounds.



15th. January, 2020 Partial removal completed *Photo: H. Rogan*



5th June, 2020, Dam and rock walls still in place *Photo: Jenny Price*

DOC and LINZ have granted TANL an easement so that they can install a bridge over the stream.

Conditions include:

That establishment of the easement facility occurs between 1 April and 31 August to avoid the Fairy Tern breeding season, and that the bridge may not be installed unless the weir and ford downstream are first removed and the marginal strip remediated including planting with native vegetation to the satisfaction of the Grantor.

Public access

The Concessionaire [TANL], at its cost, must install signage on the bridge to clearly identify that public access to the bridge and the Mangawhai Marginal Strip is permitted. All signage is to be agreed to in advance by the Grantor [DOC].

25. Further to clause 17.1 in Schedule 2, the public shall have free vehicle, foot and horse access over the bridge except when it is closed for maintenance or safety purposes.

Existing pump station, weir and ford (to be removed)

26. The existing pump station (to be removed) as shown on “plan 15044 / sheet 2 of 2 / Revision E” in Schedule 4 must be removed prior to the installation and the Easement Land restored to a condition to the satisfaction of the Grantor.

27. The existing weir and ford as shown on “plan 15044 / sheet 1 of 2 / Revision E” in Schedule 4 must be removed prior to the installation of the bridge, and in any event prior to 31 August 2020. The Easement Land must be restored immediately after the weir and ford are removed, to a condition to the satisfaction of the Grantor.

We will need to be vigilant to ensure that TANL abide by the terms of these conditions.

Please join us

Would you like to be part of the NZ Fairy Tern Charitable Trust team?

We're a very committed, congenial committee and we love the work we do to protect the fairy tern, but we could really use some extra hands. Please get in touch if you would like to help. Contact Joy Wilson at wilsonjoy@xtra.co.nz or 027 677 8147 or Heather Rogan at heatherrogan2017@gmail.com or 0210 520 622.

More on Te Arai Stream

Sioux Plowman reports:

Tuesday 2 June several beach walkers discovered dead eels on Pacific Beach in the vicinity of Te Arai Stream mouth.

The next day more dead and unwell eels were found in the lagoon just above the beach and jammed up against the rocks at the weir.

DoC and Auckland Council were informed, but to date we have not heard if they have responded.



The story is that there was a breach of a sediment pond at a local quarry, the contents finding their way into the stream.

Photos: Sioux Plowman

