

# THE RIMU-TALKER

*A newsletter of the Rimutaka Forest Park Charitable Trust Incorporated  
September 2017*

## **Heritage & Environment Community Award Winner!**

Every year, Wellington International Airport, Wellington Community Trust, and the five local councils come together to recognise the work carried out by community groups in the wider Wellington region.

**We are thrilled to announce that The Rimutaka Forest Park Trust is the winner of the Heritage & Environment category at the Wellington Airport Regional Hutt City Community Awards.**

The award was presented at the Hutt City function hosted by Ray Wallace. We received support from the Wainuiomata Community Marae team, who serenaded us all evening and sang "kiwi, kiwi, kiwi..." when our award was announced.

The Trust has been invited to attend the regional awards dinner hosted by Wellington International Airport where the overall winners for each category are announced. Wish us luck!



## **Operation Nest Egg (O.N.E.) Update**



Photo Joanna Sim - Dab Chick

Spring has sprung and the kiwi-breeding season is underway in the Park. In her recent update to volunteers Melody McLaughlin said, "We have had a couple of nests hatch in the last few weeks with a few more to follow"

There are still four chicks to come back into the park from last season's breeding.

Like many kiwi youngsters they are spirited and curious. The crèche reports that two of them needed to be separated as they were squabbling! Another chick at the crèche kicked off her transmitter so the tracking dogs will be sent in this month to try and find her.

## **Pharazyn Trust Grant**

The Pharazyn Trust, one of our long-standing supporters, has provided us with a generous grant to purchase a further thirty DOC200 traps for the park. The traps are ready to be installed in the Catchpool Eco hotspot where we have greatly intensified the trapping network.

Thank you to the wonderful volunteers for continuing to regularly check the traps. Kiwi Project Coordinator Melody McLaughlin said, "The trapping results is one of the few ways we can retain visibility of what is happening with the pests in the park"

The balance of the grant will be put towards the O.N.E. (Operation Nest Egg) costs for this coming kiwi-breeding season.

## **Epic volunteer mission to install new A24 traps**

Words by Lee Barry DOC

The park was swarming with volunteers earlier this month installing a massive new network of next-generation traps to tackle stoats and rats.



Forty volunteers from Rimutaka Forest Park Trust, MOA Trust, and local tramping and running clubs worked with Department of Conservation and Goodnature staff in Rimutaka Forest Park to put in over 300 person-hours over Friday 8th and Saturday 9th Sept. This brings the total number of new self-resetting Goodnature traps in the park to 700, on top of the 1000 traditional traps already in place. In effect doubling the number of traps on the hill. This is the most significant pest trapping expansion in the park since the Trust released kiwi in 2006 and expanded their pest control in 2015.

DOC Conservation Ranger Angus Hulme-Moir said, "This was an epic volunteer mission. Having so many people pitching in was fantastic and shows how much support there is in the community to restoring the birdsong to this popular park."

In a co-ordinated approach, the park received its first ever application of 1080 poison to control possums in July, as part of OSPRI's TB-free programme. The volunteer trap installation is timed to complement this approach.

"With the 1080 drop having knocked down numbers, this is the perfect time to deploy this new network of traps, keeping predators suppressed and giving nature the best chance to rebound," said Angus.

Ultimately a total of 1,000 self-resetting traps will pepper the park, including throughout the steep track-less 'tiger country' on the southeast of the Orongorongo river. The next mission to install these remaining traps is planned for November.

The trap technology includes auto-lure dispensers meaning the traps only need one check every 6 months, considerably reducing the ongoing volunteer commitment.

## **Aerial and ground control for possums**

The benefits of these operations conducted by Osprey (TBFREE) on our projects are not only the reduction in possums (which interfere with kiwi nests) but also the reduction in rats & mice, and all going well a bi-kill of stoats (when the stoats eat the possums & rats).

There have been some interesting observations on our trapping results with reasonable numbers of rats caught on lines outside or on the border of the aerial operation and minimal or no rats caught on lines inside the core area. This has been the data collect 4-5 weeks post the drop. Ground control work has commenced on some private land adjoining the park and also in the Catchpool Valley.

## **Come to our AGM**

Thursday 26th October 2017, 7.00pm  
Petone Library Meeting Rooms, 54 Richmond St, Petone

The AGM will be followed by an informative talk from:  
Stephen Hartley – Deputy Director, Centre for Biodiversity and Restoration, VUW  
and Roald Bomans (Masters Student)

“Biodiversity and pest monitoring in the Aorangi and Rimutaka Ranges –  
how we do it and what we have found”

We look forward to seeing familiar and new faces. We will also be auctioning a very special book at the AGM. The book is “American Landscape” by T H Watkins with photos by David Meunch. This book was donated to by the American Embassy in appreciation for hosting them on World Earth Day 2016. Proceeds of the auction will go to fundraising projects.

## **Volunteer Days – Catchpool Restoration Project**

We continue to benefit from the generous efforts of new and loyal volunteer groups in restoring the Catchpool area.

- On their “Closed for Good” day, the BNZ team tidied up the nursery, planted over 150 natives and dispatched a fair few wilding pines and acacia.
- A group off 11 from BMP Paribas helped us complete the last of the planting for the season as well as helping with the ongoing weed clearing.



Two groups of students and teachers from Wā Ora Montessori kindly took time during a school camp to volunteer for the Restoration Project.

This photo shows the first group enjoying a lovely sunny day in the park.

Their enthusiastic help with planting and gorse eradication was much appreciated.

## **Tool Donation from PlaceMakers**

The Rimutaka Forest Park Trust would like to thank Garth and the team from PlaceMakers Hutt City & Wairarapa for their donation of hardware and tools for the volunteers to use in our conservation efforts.

Garth says, “I have read that the average kill of pest is just over 1,000 not including Possums or feral cats. This is an amazing accomplishment and a tribute to the outstanding work by everybody associated with the Trust.”



Garth McInnes from PlaceMakers with Rimu, Rosemary Thompson, Grant Watt, Alan Thompson from the Rimutaka Forest Park Trust

**“Wild Kiwi” Children’s T-Shirts**



With assistance from Village Accommodation, we are able to offer these great children's T-shirts (size 2-14). These are perfect gifts for the Wild Kiwis in your life.

T-shirts are \$20 each and all proceeds go to the Trust.

Please contact [info@rimutakatrust.org.nz](mailto:info@rimutakatrust.org.nz) to order.

**Save the Date – 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2017**  
**End of year BBQ**

Save a spot for us in your summer BBQ schedule!

Bring your family down to the park for our end of year Christmas BBQ on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December.

More details closer to the date.



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**Thank you to all those like-minded people and organisations who have sponsored a trap, Kiwi or tree through the Rimutaka Forest Park Trust’s sponsorship programme**

