



Newsletter No. 64

# MOTUORA RESTORATION SOCIETY (INC)

PO Box 100132, North Shore  
Auckland 0745

[www.motuora.org.nz](http://www.motuora.org.nz)

April 2017

## NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Motuora Restoration Society's AGM  
to be held on Sunday, 28<sup>th</sup> May 2017  
at Red Cross Hall, Silverdale at 1.30 p.m.

### AGENDA

1. Minutes of the May 2016 AGM
2. Matters arising from the Minutes
3. Financial Report
4. Chairperson's Annual Report
5. Election of Officers/Committee Members\*
6. Subscriptions for the 2017/2018 year
7. Any other business

\*The officers of the Society comprise the Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary, and the Constitution calls for at least two other committee members. Nominations for all these positions will be accepted by mail, to be received by the Secretary at PO Box 100132 North Shore, Auckland 0745, by Thursday 25 May 2017. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor at the meeting. All nominees, proposers and seconders must be financial members of the Society.

## Seabird Monitoring by John Stewart.

Thanks to the generous grant from Auckland Council we were able to carry out regular checks on our breeding seabirds this summer.

Two pairs of fluttering shearwaters raised a single chick each this season. One pair occupied a nest box on the cliff edge near the gannet colony. This is the second season they have raised a chick from that box. The second pair was attracted to our newly installed boxes on the inland side of the track above and behind the gannet colony. This is the first successful pair to use the new boxes and we are hoping that a few more will follow suit in the years to come.

Our gannet colony began the season in promising fashion with 19 active nests by late October. By early December we had 12 chicks with two birds still sitting on eggs. But the situation gradually deteriorated with subsequent checks over the next two months

finding fewer live chicks and more casualties with each visit. By the 5<sup>th</sup> February there was only one surviving chick. There was no activity by early March when a thorough check found 11 sets of skeletal remains (as pic. shows) most of which appeared to be of fairly large and well-developed chicks. It is most likely that no chicks survived to fledge this year. The chicks and their parents suffered some severe weather over the season but insufficient food is another potential cause of failure. Since we do not closely monitor chick development we are unable to determine what caused the deaths. We will consider whether it would be beneficial to monitor chick growth next year but there is always a risk associated with disturbing nesting gannets and it may be better to sit back and watch for another season.

The Pycroft's petrel translocation appears to be progressing reasonably well. This year we had two pairs identified last year return to



the colony early enough to breed. One pair, in box 53, produced the first Pycroft's egg to be laid and hatched on the Island (pic. above by Kay Milton). We don't know the exact date of laying but it was either towards the end of the normal period or the chick was developing slowly – possibly due to a lower than desirable feeding rate by inexperienced

first-time parents. Sadly, the well-developed chick was found dead in its burrow on the 9<sup>th</sup> April. It was partly decomposed but seemed to be still about two weeks away from possible fledging.

While disappointing that the chick didn't survive it is a great mile stone that translocated birds have returned to the island more than once and laid an egg.

From the three Pycroft's translocations in 2013, 14 and 15 total sightings of returning birds to date are summarised in the table below. In 2015/16 monitoring we identified the first six birds listed from the 2013 cohort. Four of these, originally found in boxes, were found again this year in the same boxes. This year we also had five more previously unrecorded birds from the 2013 translocation and our first two birds from the 2014 translocation (the last two listed in the table). Four of these new birds appeared to be paired and occupied boxes 11 and 74. Eleven individual birds were recorded this season and we have four potential breeding pairs for next season (as indicated in the grouped-coloured cells).

Bird ID	Box/Seen 2015/16	Box/Seen 2016/17
207311	Seen	
207318	53	53
207309	53	53
207397	61	61
207507	61	61
207307	17	
207374		Seen
207348		Seen
207370		11
207316		11
207387		74
207561		74
207573		Seen
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>

## WORK TRIPS TO THE ISLAND

We have adopted a more flexible approach to the visit dates and circulate an email request for help on specific tasks as they come up.

Visit our website and record your interest to be involved in on-going volunteer work in the following areas.

- nursery work and tree planting
- weed control
- bird monitoring
- lizard monitoring
- infrastructure projects and administration

**Financial Support** Since our last newsletter we have succeeded in our application to Auckland Council's Regional Environment and Natural Heritage Grant Programme. We have been awarded \$5,000 towards the costs of travelling to and from the Island for management and monitoring work which means we are able to fully implement our work plans for the next twelve months.



## THANK YOU

**Bridgestone Ltd.** for sponsorship.

**Yates NZ** for ongoing support with propagation supplies.

**Kawau Cruises** for support with transport costs.

**Heseltine Family Trust** support towards cost of restoration work.

**Sheila Coombs** for a donation towards the cost of work on the island.

**WHAT DEBBIE DID.** Rain delivered from cyclone Debbie caused a slip above the tractor track up from Home Bay (Chookie Corner). Volunteers set to work with spades to clear the slip and open the track again. The area was planted in 2013.





<b>Motuora Restoration Society</b>  The Society is undertaking the restoration of native forest to create habitat for endangered and absent common species on the island, and translocating such fauna and flora. Membership is \$25 per year for individuals or families, and \$5 for students.	<i>Chair</i> John Stewart      09 428 4541	Bruce Ross      09 445 1140
	<i>Secretary</i> Liz Norquay      09 424 7444	Helen Lindsay      03 528 4020
	<i>Treasurer</i> Nattu Nataraj      09 624 6247	Roger Harker      09 6366507
	Les Buckton      09 425 9619	Colin Cordes      09 638 7726
	Kevin Hawkins      09 424 7444	Charities Commission Number CC 10250
<a href="http://www.motuora.org.nz">www.motuora.org.nz</a>		

Taken in March these lush seeds heads and flowers are an example of flourishing native bush now well established



### Department of Conservation - establishing new working relationships

Progress continues on the appointment of a new ranger for the Island. We understand that an offer of employment has been made and await confirmation before the details can be made public. We are hoping a new person can be in post to take over from Dave Jenkins sometime in May.

We also have a new Community Ranger, Patrick Clarke, who fills the role previously occupied by Bevan Moir. We'll hear more from our new ranger and from Patrick in a future newsletter.

Along with these changes there has been some further re-organisation within the Department of Conservation. DOC's work in the Auckland region has now been split among three groups: islands, mainland and Great Barrier. We fall within the islands group and our new area manager is Keith Gell. Keith's staff work out of both the Warkworth and North Head offices. So our contacts for Motuora will be Keith, Patrick, our new ranger and, when appointed, a senior bio-diversity ranger.

Obviously, with a complete change of personnel at DOC, we are once-again faced with the task of establishing new working relationships and of negotiating our way around the new organisational structures. We hope to do this as quickly as possible to minimise further delays in implementing our plans for the Island. Fortunately, much of our work can proceed under existing arrangements.

**DOC Ranger Motuora**

**0274 053 352**

Motuora is a unique island with sandy beaches and clear water. The island is a recreation reserve. Camping is permitted but there is no regular ferry service.

Motuora Restoration Society offers opportunities to visit this special place and to contribute to the work of establishing native forest which is a habitat for endangered species. Join us on trips to the island and take part in tree planting, nursery work, or monitoring reptile and bird life.

You can also support this valuable restoration work by becoming a member of the Society or by sending a donation. Regular newsletters will keep you up to date with activities.

Motuora Restoration Society (Inc)

PO Box 100132

North Shore Mail Centre

Auckland 0745

## Motuora Restoration Society Inc

### Membership Application Form

Name(s): .....

Address: .....

.....

Email.....

Phone:..... (h)..... (w)

.....

Can you offer any skills or service to the society?

.....

How did you hear about the project?

.....

Subscription (\$)

Individual/Family/Club \$25.00

Student \$5.00

Donations welcome (\$)

Total Enclosed (\$)

Receipt required Y/N

I/we agree to the following of my/our personal details being made available to others when it is for the purpose of furthering the objects of the Society:-

Address Yes/No ..... Phone Yes/No