



MOTUORA RESTORATION SOCIETY (INC)

PO Box 100132, North Shore
Auckland 0745

www.motuora.org.nz

Newsletter No. 54

December 2013

SUPPORT FROM BRIDGESTONE LTD

Motuora Restoration Society Chairman Ray Lowe welcomed Bridgestone workers, as well as regular planters and members of Forest & Bird, who had braved the elements to come and plant trees on the end of September work day on the island. He also acknowledged that Bridgestone had recently become an important financial sponsor of the Motuora Restoration Society.

After the formalities some 3,000 trees were planted by the 96 volunteers under the able guidance of regular MRS members. Planting was completed before noon so there was ample opportunity for folk to explore the island and see some of the bird life and the bountiful Kowhai and Manuka flowers.

The Motuora Restoration Society is grateful for the support of members and volunteers as we recognise that it is a considerable commitment to travel to Sandspit early on a Sunday morning and contribute to the cost of hiring the ferry to Motuora. MRS subsidises the ferry costs as



Bill Dyall, Bridgestone Ltd., Corporate Accounts Manager, responded to Ray's welcome and spoke enthusiastically about the participation of the Bridgestone team in the restoration work before he and Trish Southan, Consumer Business Assistant, presented a plaque to be mounted on a sign board at the potting shed which recognizes all MRS sponsors.

Photo: Bruce Ross



Gannets colony in the making

The gannet site has been a hive of activity since mid-August with more than thirty birds frequently visiting the site. Sixteen eggs are being incubated with a few late comers still building nests. If all goes well we should be expecting the first chicks in mid-December. (Last year 2 eggs hatched but the young did not survive to fledge.)

Photos: Toby Shanley

The water tank up beside the Ridge Track unfortunately developed a leak and, thanks to Island Minder Murray Faulkner, this was detected before all of the water were lost. On the October work day a group of volunteers under the guidance of Island Manager Toby Shanley moved the old tank to its new location where it was “repurposed”. It is now a shed, complete with locking door, and is in use as dry and secure storage space. (See photoe. opposite) And yes, a new water tank is in place for piped water to the camp ground at Home Bay.



THANK YOU

Bridgestone Ltd. for sponsorship.

Ron and Edna Greenwood Environmental Trust for contribution towards cost of acoustic attraction system for Pycroft's petrels.

Lion Foundation for contribution towards costs of 2013/14 weed control programme.

WWF NZ for contribution towards costs of 2013/14 weed control programme.

Auckland Zoo Conservation Fund for total cost of 2014 Pacific Gecko translocation.

Lottery Grants Board for total cost of 2014 Pycroft's petrel translocation.

Agropro NZ Ltd for herbicides.

Yates NZ for ongoing support with propagation supplies.

The Mad Butcher, Glenfield for support with sausages for our BBQ lunches.

Kawau Cruises for support with transport costs.

Hester Cooper for donation of root trainers.



HELP FOR HANDS

Is there anyone who could donate funds towards the cost of purchasing **gardening gloves**. We need to renew our stocks on the island which are used by volunteers. Please contact MRS Chairman, Ray Lowe on mobile 027 268 1092

Wash Day at the potting shed.

Photo: Liz Norquay

Charities commission registration number CC 10250

Motuora Restoration Society
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>Chairperson</i>	Ray Lowe	09 426 6900
<i>Secretary</i>	Kit Brown	09 446 0618
<i>Treasurer</i>	Gillian Thomas	09 426 1481
	Les Buckton	09 425 9619
	Kevin Hawkins	09 424 7444
	Robin Gardner Gee	

Bruce Ross	09 445 1140
Helen Lindsay	03 528 4020
Liz Norquay	09 424 7444
John Stewart	09 833 7059
Colin Cordes	09 638 7726

HELLO FROM THE ISLAND

SIAN POTIER and TOBY SHANLEY

Island Managers

The weather is warming and the winds have been surprisingly calm for this time of year.

The sun has been shining out here on Motuora. We have been seeing an influx of day visitors to Motuora during the weekends and we are starting to get the occasional camping group staying overnight. The fish have been biting, the dolphins have been visiting at Home Bay.

The dotterels have had quite a bit of success so far this year with one chick fledging from a nest in front of the house at Home Bay, another young chick hatched along the beach southwards and three chicks recently hatched in front of the camp. The pair at Still Bay have hatched at least one chick so far also.

The gannet site has been a hive of activity since mid August. We have been seeing more than 30 birds at the site at one time and at least 16 birds are incubating eggs. We observed the first eggs at the site at the end of October which means we should be expecting the first chicks to hatch around mid December. We are keeping a close watch on the site and often sit up there for an hour or so just before dark to watch birds coming in and socialising.

At the diving petrel site we managed to locate four burrows with male and female divers in them. We have also been hearing calls from other locations on the island suggesting that birds may be breeding in places other than the translocation site. We have also seen some activity at the northern end of the island where the speaker system plays fluttering shearwater calls at night. Two of the artificial burrows have feathers in them so hopefully in a few years time we will have a thriving fluttering shearwater colony as well.

The September planting day was a great success with close to 100 people, many of them from Bridgestone, coming out to plant the last of the trees from the nursery. Unfortunately the pukekos have pulled out quite a few of the plants from that planting day, it seems most of the islands pukekos have learnt this trick!



Spring is a busy time for us in terms of weed control as many of the weeds are in flower and easy to spot, also it is a great time to find any weedy plants before they set seed. We have been continuing to grid search the whole island in search of weeds and had Helen Lindsey come out in September to give us a hand. One weedy grass (veldt grass) has recently turned up in the campground probably off a camper's tent or somebody's shoes. This weed was already on Motuora but only in a very small patch. Finding weeds like this in the camp just stresses the need for people to check their camping gear and clothing well not only for animal pests but also for seeds.

We are looking forward to another busy summer

on Motuora and we are hoping it is not quite as dry as last year!

Cheers, Sian and Toby



Lizards

Last summer Massey University researchers released 90 Duvaucel's geckos on Motuora boosting the small resident population that was reintroduced in 2006. Monitoring during the year has included fitting some with small "backpacks" containing transmitters in an effort to further understand the movement patterns and habitat use of New Zealand's largest living gecko species.

Pycroft's Petrels

Plans are underway for the second translocation of Pycroft's Petrels from Whakau/Red Mercury to Motuora. Funds have been granted to enable moving approximately 100 chicks in early March 2014. An acoustic attraction system has been funded and put in place at the intended colony site. In March this year 70 chicks were transferred and fledged successfully from Motuora, healthy and at a good weight.



Bridgestone volunteers busy planting on the September work trip.
Photo: Bruce Ross

MONITORING TEAMS

The Grey Faced Petrel burrow count was conducted by a small team in June. There are six colony sites on the island where this species of Petrel breeds. Monitoring of burrows and later, chick banding is on-going.

Reptile monitoring teams will spend a few days on Motuora again this January to do the annual check on three species of lizard – Common gecko, Duvaucel's gecko and Shore skink.

WORK TRIPS TO THE ISLAND DURING 2014

— LAST SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH

Motuora Restoration Society appreciates the support of loyal members who donate annual subscription of \$25 to support the project. Your contribution will advance the development of this very special place

On-going tree work, nursery work, seed gathering, track maintenance and weeding as well as monitoring of sea birds, forest birds, lizards and insects are tasks that depend on input from volunteers.

Please join us on the monthly work trips. Visit our website and record your interest to be sent the monthly reminder.

www.motuora.org.nz



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Address Block