

NEWSLETTER

Our Mission: To enrich the community through the restoration and guardianship of an indigenous Marlborough Sounds wildlife sanctuary, in which the natural ecosystems, native flora and fauna flourish in a predator-free environment that can be appreciated by all.



CHAIRMAN'S COMMENT

While the majority of our efforts over the past 12 years have been focused on removing pests and maintaining a predator free status; extending the halo beyond the Sanctuary is absolutely vital to help future-proof our efforts. As this issue goes to print, we're absolutely thrilled to have received funding for the eradication of wasps on Kaipupu Point and the surrounding areas of Picton and Waikawa. Would you like to be involved in some way? Perhaps you have noticed wasps in your own garden? There's many ways to contribute. Turn the page for more info.

Have you visited the Sanctuary over summer? Mark your calendar for Saturday 18 March, we're planning our annual trip to the Sanctuary. Look out for details on your email, our Facebook page. We're also starting

to plan more fun events like another Quiz night. If you have thoughts on fundraising events and would like to help, please get in touch.

Finally, on behalf of the Committee, we're very sad to say goodbye to Pete Hamill, who has been a guiding force as Chair most recently, and committee member leading our Biodiversity team since 2013. This means we are looking for a new Committee member to join us. If you are passionate about the environment and keen to help manage the direction of the Sanctuary, please come along to the AGM later this year and put your hand up.

Chrissy Powlesland (Deputy Chair)

ABOVE: A family of Oystercatchers enjoying the summer sun on the jetty.

FEBRUARY 2017

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KEEP UP TO DATE

Make sure that we have your email address so you can keep up to date with all the exciting things happening at the Sanctuary. If you haven't heard from us in a while then let us know.



info@kaipupupoint.co.nz



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VESPULA THIEVES GET THE DEATH PENALTY THIS SUMMER

Every summer wasps are an unwelcome guest who make picnics at the beach or native bush walks unpleasant and sometimes dangerous for visitors. These vespula thieves steal food resources from our native birds and insects and in some areas, reduce the honeydew crop by up to 90%.

Two wasps feeding on Vespex bait, which they will take back to their nest.

PHOTO: Merchant website



Wasps eat a wide range of invertebrates including spiders, caterpillars, ants, bees and flies, and may predate some native invertebrates to the point of population collapse. In New Zealand beech forests, the total biomass of wasps is thought to be more than that of native birds, with an average of 12 nests or 10,000 wasps per hectare. At Kaipupu Wildlife Sanctuary, wasps gather near the water ponds and feed on honeydew collected from beech trees. In the

past, each nest has been dealt with on discovery but this year we are aiming to remove over 90% of all wasps using Vespex. This highly effective wasp bait targets common wasp (*Vespula vulgaris*) and German wasp (*V. germanica*) when they are feeding on protein. The bait is collected by individual wasps and taken back to their nests where the slow acting insecticide is shared throughout the colony. It does not target bees and has a low toxicity to mammals and birds, in fact the

active ingredient is commonly found in flea treatments.

We know that Vespex will be extremely effective on the Sanctuary but we want to aim bigger... we want to get rid of wasps from the whole of Picton and Waikawa. By targeting a larger area, it will reduce reinvasion of wasps onto the Sanctuary but it will also benefit the wildlife around Picton and Waikawa, and it will make fish and chips on the foreshore much more enjoyable.

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COMMITTEE CHANGES

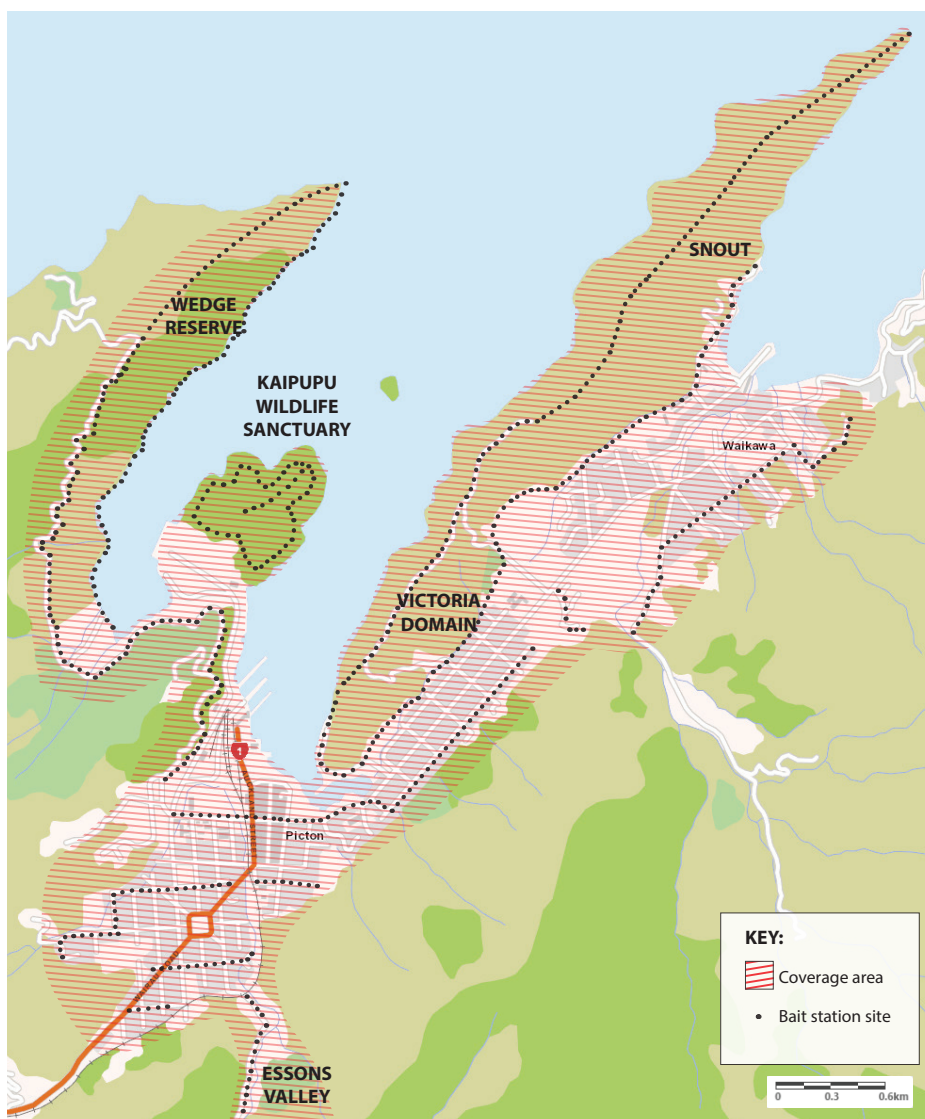
In January, we said goodbye to Peter Hamill who has been an integral part of the Kaipupu Point Mainland Island Society committee for many years. His expert knowledge has been vital to developing biodiversity on the Sanctuary and as Chairperson Pete has done an excellent job since taking on the role in July 2016. Robin Cox will act as an interim chairperson until the next AGM in June. We are also welcoming Wendy Sullivan as the DOC representative on the committee and look forward to her input.

Pete's departure has left a gap in the committee so we are now looking for new volunteers to join the committee. Kaipupu Point Mainland Island Society committee oversees the management of Kaipupu Wildlife Sanctuary and each committee member contributes knowledge or expertise in different areas and provides guidance to the two coordinators. If you are interested in conservation, working with a great team of volunteers and have some spare time please get in contact with us.

To achieve large-scale wasp control, we need help. Once testing shows the right level of wasp numbers, 520 bait stations will need to be placed across Picton and Waikawa including The Wedge, Victoria Domain, Essons Valley and urban areas. We are looking for people who are keen to help with this process but we are also looking for people who would like to host a bait station in their own backyard. The map (right) gives an indication of where bait stations are likely to be placed, if you would like to help please give us a call.

The annual cost of this programme is approx. \$3,500 which has been achieved thanks to support from Port Marlborough, Marlborough District Council and a donation from The Veronica Trust. This programme will be done annually so if you would like to donate funds to help us achieve a wasp free Picton/Waikawa every year, please contact Rachel by phone on 027 692 3488 or email admin@kaipupupoint.co.nz

For more information about Vespex visit www.merchento.com/vespex



A REALLY WEEDY PROBLEM

Did you know that there are now more introduced plant species growing in the wild than native plant species? These weeds threaten the long-term survival of native animals by changing and destroying their habitat, reducing the availability of food or breeding sites or influencing the way animals behave.

On Kaipupu Wildlife Sanctuary our volunteers spend time removing weeds such as Old Man's Beard but we are in need of more volunteers to help with this. Our monitoring tracks are becoming invaded by weeds that smother and kill native plants and prevent the establishment of native plant

seedlings. We need to create a team of weedbusters who will be responsible for ridding the Sanctuary of weeds, if you can help please get in contact with us at admin@kaipupupoint.co.nz.

Top image: Sycamore leaves
Bottom image: Old Mans Beard



DOC SUMMER EXPLORER SERIES

The DOC Summer Explorer Series is back for summer 2017, with plenty of places to visit and adventurous things to do.

Kaipupu Wildlife Sanctuary is hosting two visits as part of this initiative. The first was held on Saturday the 28th of January, with a large group of keen visitors taking a walk on the wild side. The tour was led by trained guide Nicky Jenkins who talked about the history of the Sanctuary, the wildlife and our volunteers.

After a quick boat ride thanks to Beachcomber Cruises, the group walked the 2.7km circular track taking in the view of the stunning Marlborough Sounds from the lookout and discovered a moulting Little Blue Penguin in the purpose built penguin box. Nicky also discussed the work our volunteers do to keep the Sanctuary free of pests and the purpose of the two metre tall predator proof fence.

The next trip will take place on the 5th of March, departing at 1.30pm and returning at 4.30pm. Tickets are \$20 for members and \$30 for non-members. To book your spot please contact Rachel 027 692 3488 or email admin@kaipupupoint.co.nz.

Marlborough Historical Society are also running two tour options this summer and members of Kaipupu Point Mainland Island Society are able to get special rates.

19th February – Captain Cook cruise

Join Marlborough Historic Society on a cruise to Ship Cove, Motuara Island and Wharehaunga Bay. Local historian, John Orchard will bring the story of Captain Cook's discovery of New Zealand to life in anticipation of the 250th Year Celebrations. Meet at the Beachcomber jetty in Picton at 8:45am and returning approximately 5 pm. Bring food, cold drinks and suitable clothing for the day. Hot water will be available on the boat. As you will land on Motuara Island please ensure your footwear is clean and there are no seeds attached to clothing. Cost \$50.00 per MHS member and \$60.00 for non-members.

Contact Brayshaw Park 03 578 1712

17th & 18th March – Molesworth high country tour

Learn about the history of these two iconic high country stations. You will need a reliable high clearance 4WD, or a seat in one to take part. MHS may be able to help to facilitate transport but this is reliant on the cooperation of those with 4WD taking part. For more information about costs please contact Marlborough Museum 03 578 1712

Limited numbers apply to both trips so book your ticket early.



GRANT SUCCESS FUNDS COORDINATORS

The Christmas period bought some gifts for the Sanctuary with continued support from Rata Foundation and Marlborough District Council. Local funder, Rata Foundation approved a \$25,000 grant which will be used to pay for the vital pest coordinator role at the Sanctuary. This role which is currently undertaken by Trudy Nicholas is the necessary link between the Society's committee and volunteers and ensures long-term monitoring of pest numbers, and effective implementation of the pest trapping regime is completed.

We were also successful in our application for funding from the Marlborough District Council with a grant of \$9,000 which will be put towards the Project Coordinator fees. Our Project Coordinator, Rachel Russell, is based in the Kaipupu shop in Mariners Mall four days a week and oversees a range of tasks including administration, compliance, education, marketing, community outreach and maintaining relationships with the community, our members, DOC, Port Marlborough and sponsors.

THE GREAT RODENT DETECTIVES

Across New Zealand, the DOC conservation dog programme uses highly trained dogs to sniff out protected species like kiwi and pest species like rodents and mustelids.



Certain dog species are more suited for the job with pointers often used for protected species and terriers used to find pests. On the 13th of January, Kaipupu Wildlife Sanctuary was visited by Leona Plaisier and her team of rodent detecting dogs to investigate rodent numbers and potential weaknesses in the predator proof fence. The team began the search at the predator proof fence and then continued around the coastal track. Leona found that the fence was in really good condition with only one spot that might

be a hiding spot for rodents. Surprisingly, the dogs flushed out a couple of rats from areas of grass. One theory for this unusual occurrence is that the rats on the Sanctuary have no real predators and therefore have nothing to fear from living at ground level. These visits help us to determine where we might focus our efforts to control pest species. Next month we are expecting a visit from a stoat detecting dog, we anticipate that this will confirm that the Sanctuary is 100% free of stoats.



GET HOME SAFE

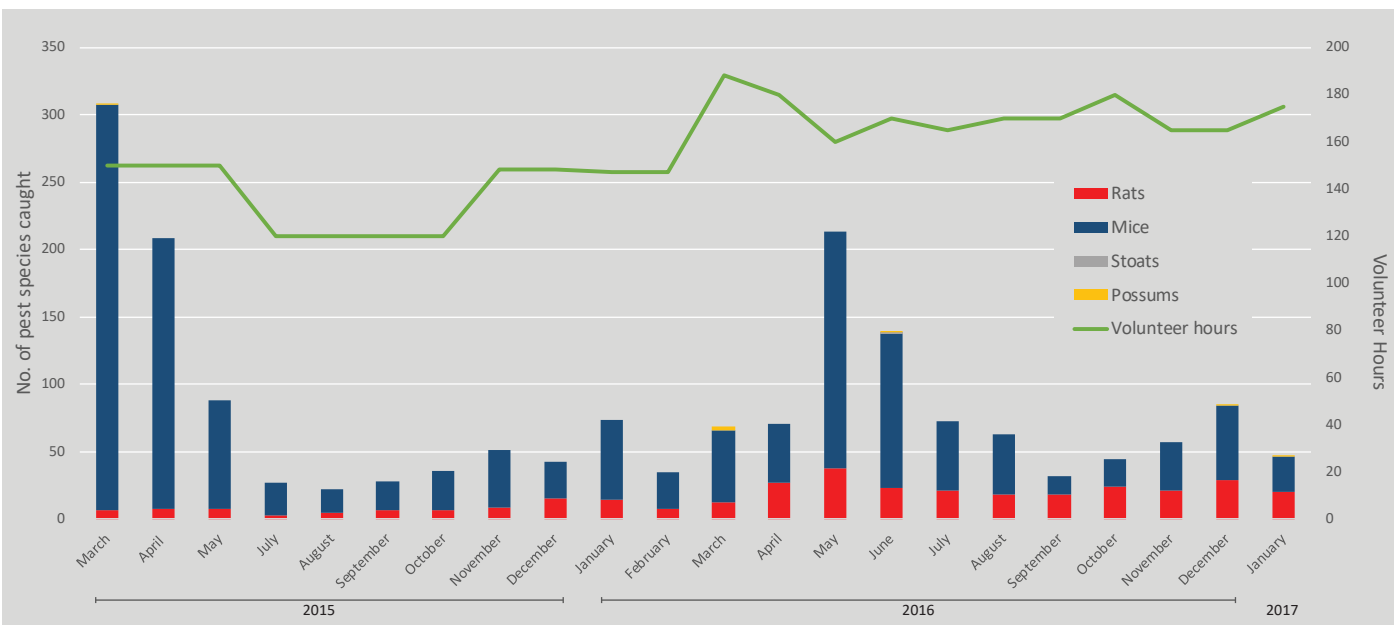
Health and Safety of our volunteers was a big focus for the Sanctuary last year. As a committee we developed some new policies which help us to ensure that all our volunteers are safe while visiting and working on the Sanctuary. One new tool was the introduction of the "Get Home Safe" app. This app allows our volunteers, who occasionally work alone, to check in and out of the Sanctuary. With an alert system for emergency situations or if a volunteer is late this app provides reassurance that everyone is accounted for. If you are a volunteer working at the Sanctuary and want to know more about this app please get in contact with Trudy or Rachel.

IMPORTANT SANCTUARY BIOSECURITY

When you visit Kaipupu Wildlife Sanctuary please remember to check your belongings for any seeds or soil which can transport pest species. Make sure your boat is rodent free and please do not take dogs onto the Sanctuary.



Rat tracks (image: DOC website)



THOSE PESKY PESTS

Kaipupu Point has seen many changes over the last two hundred years, from lush native forest filled with deafening bird song where Maori collected shellfish from the coastline to its use as a grazing site for sheep, where bare land and grass dominated large areas. Now with protection from pest species the bird life and native plants are thriving once more but this is heavily dependent on removing pest species and keeping them out. The devastation caused by larger pest species like rats, possums and stoats is widely known but the impact of mice in our native forests is often overlooked, deemed insignificant. A recent study by Landcare Research has uncovered

some undesirable consequences of mice in New Zealand forests, with the greatest impact on ground dwelling invertebrates. Two times as many invertebrates were found in areas with few or no mice and in areas where there were high numbers of mice, the beetles and weta were half the size, possibly due to predation on larger individuals. There were also significantly fewer earthworms in areas with mice. This ultimately means more competition for food resources for insectivorous birds like the kiwi and robin. The other risk identified in this study was that mice could potentially burrow out of sanctuaries under fences, increasing the risk of larger predators entering the sanctuary via these tunnels. At Kaipupu Wildlife Sanctuary we often see large increases in mouse

numbers in autumn (see graph above) which may be in response to an increase in food resources (eg. Beech seeds). However, the mice numbers at the Sanctuary are actually relatively low compared with uncontrolled areas so they may have limited effect on invertebrate numbers and in turn kiwi and South Island robin. Over the summer catch numbers of rats and mice rose slightly, especially in December. However, in January catch rates were lower than January 2016, this may be due to the inconsistent weather and hopefully lower breeding rates. Our volunteers have been working hard to check traps over the busy summer period, with some even visiting on Christmas day. Thank you for your continued commitment and effort in keeping pest numbers low.



The shop is open four days a week (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday) from 9am until 3pm. There is a great range of products that help support the Sanctuary as well as informative displays. Find us in Mariners Mall.



ROWI KIWI UPDATE

In late January, our “teenage” kiwi chicks were finally delivered home to the forests of Ōkarito after an extended summer holiday at Kaipupu Wildlife Sanctuary. The kiwi are now large enough to defend themselves against any predator species they might encounter – unfortunately this includes stoats, dogs, possums and rats.

The biggest threat to kiwi are stoats, which are able to prey on species four to five times heavier than themselves. Young rowi are especially vulnerable and prior to the introduction of Operation Nest Egg only two chicks from 80 eggs laid each year survived to adulthood.

The Operation Nest Egg programme raises the number of rowi chicks making it adulthood each year to 50. Dogs also find kiwi easy to track thanks to their distinctive smell. It is vital we are vigilant on the Sanctuary and that no dogs are allowed ashore, one dog can devastate an entire kiwi population. We now have two new kiwi chicks at Kaipupu Wildlife Sanctuary, with another release planned later this month. We hope that we will be able to bring you some footage of these kiwi soon, in the meantime keep an eye out for their footprints in the sand traps around the Sanctuary.

UPCOMING EVENTS

5th March - DOC Summer Explorer Series

Departing 1.30pm, return 4.30pm, contact Rachel to book your ticket.

18th March - Annual Kaipupu Celebration

A special visit to the Sanctuary to celebrate the 12 years since it's inception. Keep an eye out for more details.

Late March/April - Autumn Plant Sale

A huge selection of plants to attract native birds, lizards and invertebrates to the garden.

CONTACT US

WEB www.kaipupupoint.co.nz

EMAIL info@kaipupupoint.co.nz

www.facebook.com/KaipupuPoint

www.twitter.com/Kaipupupoint



VISITING THE SANCTUARY

It is free to visit the Sanctuary. Access is by boat only. You can take your own boat out there or travel with one of the local water taxi companies. These trips range in price from \$20 - \$50 return. You can also access the Sanctuary by kayak.

THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS

FOUNDATION PARTNERS



RIMU (from \$5,000/year)



KOHEKOHE (from \$300-\$999/year)



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KAIPUPU WILDLIFE SANCTUARY?

GRANT FUNDING



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SPECIAL THANKS TO: Kenny Barging; Le Cafe; Picton ITM; Nigel Hutchinson; Robyn Spence;
Marlborough Helicopters; Fulton Hogan; Jordan Family Trust; Tory Channel Contractors; Outward Bound