



# Kaipupu Point

## Sounds Wildlife Sanctuary

**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.

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**ABOVE:** Meeting with Cawthorn Award Entrants at Port Marlborough



## CHAIRMAN'S COMMENT

It has been said many times, that the only certainty in life, is change.

Five solid years of Kaipupu coordination by Jenny Keene, has come to an end and we have appointed a multiskilled, and well connected local, Rachel Russell as our new coordinator, and with a changed role.

This is the first newsletter for 5 years that Jenny has not coordinated and produced, and we well know the positive feedback those newsletters have generated.

Jenny's skills as an environmental scientist ensured we stayed true to our core purpose, and that the education and promotion of those core elements was always to the fore. The initiation of the monthly speakers evenings was very successful (and will be continued) and Jenny's creativity and enterprise around our High Street shop/information centre was very apparent.

Jenny's well honed ability to secure grants ensured we achieved a lot, and were able to employ 2 part time staff to coordinate and focus our organisation.

We have a lot to be grateful for from Jenny's time with Kaipupu, and the impending translocation of some new species onto Kaipupu is a fine legacy of her time with us.

But Jenny's departure for the shores of

the Fiji islands encouraged us to rethink and reshape the role.

Rachel brings skills from her biological background, and her professional photography career.

We wanted to raise the profile of Kaipupu within Picton, keep the shop open for much of the week, and work on relationships with business, public, and our precious volunteer base.

There will be no lessening of focus on our core objectives outlined in our strategic plan, but new initiatives around fundraising, 'friendraising', profile raising, sponsor relations, and education are soon to be discussed.

When I was taking Rachel and her family on an exploratory trip around Kaipupu last Sunday morning, I was reminded of the ongoing work which often goes unseen. Some pest monitors/ trappers were doing their thing, an Outward Bound student group were reshaping the bird ponds under the watchful eye of Alan Izard and Gerald Harper, and the birds were certainly singing (and being photographed!). It was a wonderful reminder of the myriad of tasks and responsibilities and sheer hard work of our volunteers, that are sustaining our wonderful sanctuary.

We thank Jenny, we welcome Rachel. The more things change, the more they stay the same!

**Barry Maister, Chairman**

**LEFT:** Silvereye mid flight. The silvereye's Māori name is *Tauhou*, which means "stranger" or more literally, "new arrival".

**FEBRUARY 2016**

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## FAMILY LIFE IN NEW ZEALAND ROBINS – SOUND FAMILIAR?

We all know our native birds are in trouble because they are oblivious to introduced predators like cats, stoats, rats and possums. However, there is an upside to this situation – New Zealand birds are also oblivious to birdwatchers. Because of their fearlessness, our native birds will virtually open their front door and let you into their living room. Back-stage passes to their family life makes Zealandia a paradise for scientists studying animal behaviour. Below is a brief account of the astounding things our recent experiments have taught us about New Zealand robins: their loyalty would put most human couples to shame, their mathematics skills might be enough to pass National Standards, like any couple they enjoy a good squabble, which the woman always wins in the end. Our family lives are more similar to our feathered friends than you may think.

### *Life in the slow lane*

New Zealand robins are the homebodies of the bird world. They live in small territories with the same partner for their entire lives. They literally will never know what's around the next tree in the forest. Females spend most of the year caring for their kids. Males maintain the families' territory year-round and help gather food for the family

during the breeding season. Divorce is frowned upon and infidelity is rare.

Although this might sound idyllic to some, we all know that family life is not always so harmonious. Winter is a very difficult time and it places a lot of strain on their quiet, happy home life.

As days shorten and temperatures drop, insects become harder and harder for robins to find. So parents force their kids to relocate and fend for themselves. The cooperation between the sexes that characterises the summer breeding season is abandoned and partners begin to think selfishly. Males and females spend more and more time at separate ends of the family's territory and they squabble for what little food they can find. After all, there's no guarantee that their partner will survive the winter, so goodwill and cooperation fades. As times get difficult, it's every bird for themselves.

Male robins are at an obvious advantage to females during winter because they are bigger, stronger and more aggressive. So when times get really tough, males begin to bully females. Food that females work hard to find is always at the mercy of marauding males, who frequently chase females away from their next meal. Fights over food can even be violent... feathers literally fly.

*Article by Associate Professor Kevin Burns,  
School of Biological Sciences, Victoria University.  
To read more visit [www.halo.org.nz/family-life-new-zealand-robins-sound-familiar/](http://www.halo.org.nz/family-life-new-zealand-robins-sound-familiar/)*

# ROBIN TRANSFER TO KAIPUPU POINT

The dawn chorus is about to get a little louder at Kaipupu Point Sounds Wildlife Sanctuary this March with the release of South Island Robin. The arrival of any species is exciting but to have this delightfully curious bird on Kaipupu is even more so. For more information about the Robin release contact our project co-ordinator, Rachel.

To celebrate the release we have created a drawing competition for the kids, pick up your copy from the Kaipupu Information Shop in Mariners Mall.

## CONTACT:

Rachel Russell  
admin@kaipupupoint.co.nz  
027 692 3488

# CELEBRATE WITH US!

To commemorate our first species translocation we have created some tshirts which feature the South Island Robin. If you would like to pre-order a tshirt then please contact Rachel before Wednesday the 10th February. The tshirts will also be available to purchase from the Kaipupu Shop in Mariners Mall.

## *Women - Grey Marle*

Sizes XSM, SML, MED, LRG, XLG  
**\$35 each (\$30 for KP members)**

## *Men - Grey Marle*

Sizes SML, MED, LRG, XLG, 2XL, 3XL  
**\$35 each (\$30 for KP members)**

## *Kids - Carolina Blue, Pink, Kelly Green*

Sizes 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16  
**\$25 each (\$20 for KP members)**



## DOC SUMMER EXPLORER PROGRAMME

Take a boat cruise to Kaipupu Point Mainland Island, with a guided walk. Includes a cruise around the inner Queen Charlotte Sound. Bring your own food and drink. Bookings required, with payment on booking. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

**Cost:** Kaipupu friends/members: \$30 per adult, \$15 per child (17 & under)  
Non-members: \$35 per adult, \$17 per child

**When:** Saturday 13th February 11 am - 3.30 pm

**Where:** Meet at the Picton jetty

**Contact:** Robin Cox **Email:** rcox@doc.govt.nz **Phone:** 03 578 4115



# OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEERS

*TOP LEFT: Alan & helpers removing gorse.*

*TOP RIGHT: Collecting rocks to raise the water level in the ponds*

## KEEP UP TO DATE WITH KAIPUPU NEWS...

Make sure that we have your email address so to that you can keep up to date with all the exciting things happening at Kaipupu Point. If you haven't heard from us in a while then let us know at: [admin@kaipupupoint.co.nz](mailto:admin@kaipupupoint.co.nz)

Or you can visit us here: [www.kaipupupoint.co.nz](http://www.kaipupupoint.co.nz)

[www.facebook.com/KaipupuPoint](https://www.facebook.com/KaipupuPoint)

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Another busy summer season in Picton is underway with visitors enjoying the walkway around Kaipupu Point thanks to our wonderful volunteers who have given up time to continue maintenance and pest management.

Some hard-working helpers from Outward Bound visited Kaipupu on Sunday the 17th of January to complete some track maintenance and reconfigure the ponds with the help of Gerald Harper and Alan Izard. The tracks are looking great and the birds will no doubt appreciate the ease of access created by lowering the depth of the ponds. This close partnership with Outward Bound has evolved over the last few years and sees great things happen.

The Kaipupu Pest Team also held a working bee on the 24th of January to place traps along the new monitoring Q track. Pest team coordinator Trudy Nicholas commented "the day went well with over 100 traps put out on the new track. Very hot and we were all tired but lots of fun" Thank you to all our wonderful volunteers!

If you are interested in volunteering contact Trudy [kaipupupestmonitoring@gmail.com](mailto:kaipupupestmonitoring@gmail.com)



*RIGHT: Images from the Pest Team working bee*



## YOUTH CAN EMPOWER CONSERVATION

Children's commitment to conservation will help us restore our natural heritage, says Rachel Russell, the new Project Co-ordinator for the Kaipupu Point Mainland Island Society.

Appointed on December 7 to raise the public profile of the Kaipupu Point Sounds Wildlife Sanctuary, she believes getting children actively involved in its operations will increase its success and have positive spin-offs for the wider community.

"If you start at school level and that's all they know...I think it will be a culture change."

Rachel and her husband Regan, the manager of EcoWorld Aquarium in Picton, have three children and they have all planted trees and visited Kaipupu with their kindergarten classes.

Rachel's childhood started at Lake

Elterwater farm at Ward, before moving to Blenheim when she was 10 years old. She went to Canterbury University to study zoology and graduated in 2002 with a Master's degree in stream ecology. It was photography, however, that she pursued when she returned to Marlborough in 2005.

"Coming back to Marlborough was perfect timing, my mum was sick and it meant I got to spend more time with her. She encouraged me to follow my heart rather than just work at a job to get paid."

Life in Picton, Rachel adds, means her own children can regard the Marlborough Sounds as their whole backyard. "I love that I can walk out my door and be in native bush in less than 10 minutes."

Photography is a great tool for sharing natural beauty and promoting conservation but Rachel looks forward to using her "science brain" as the Kaipupu Point sanctuary's project co-ordinator.

"I'm coming in at the best time," Rachel jokes. "Everyone has put in the hard work and I get to see all the benefits!"

*Written by Angela Crompton*

## GETTING TO KAIPUPU

If you don't have your own boat to visit Kaipupu, then catch a ride with one of the local water taxis or hire a kayak...

### Arrow Water Taxis

Departs 8.30am, returns 9.55am  
1.15pm, returns 2.10pm  
4.45pm, returns 6.15pm

*Adult \$30 Child \$10*

*On demand \$80 for up to 4 people*

[www.arrowwatertaxis.co.nz](http://www.arrowwatertaxis.co.nz)  
Phone : +64 3 573 8229  
Mobile : 027 4444 689  
[info@arrowwatertaxis.co.nz](mailto:info@arrowwatertaxis.co.nz)

### Beachcomber Cruises

*On demand \$20pp (min. 4 people)*

[www.beachcomber.cruises.co.nz](http://www.beachcomber.cruises.co.nz)  
Phone: +64 3 573 6175  
Freephone: 0800 62 45 26  
[office@mailboat.co.nz](mailto:office@mailboat.co.nz)

### Cougarline

*Contact for more information*

[www.cougarline.co.nz](http://www.cougarline.co.nz)  
Phone: +64 3 573 7925  
Freephone: 0800 50 40 90  
[enquiries@cougarline.co.nz](mailto:enquiries@cougarline.co.nz)

### Marlborough Sounds Adventure Company

*Contact for more information about kayak rentals*

[www.marlboroughsounds.co.nz](http://www.marlboroughsounds.co.nz)  
Phone: +64 3 573 6078  
Freephone: 0800 283 283  
[adventure@marlboroughsounds.co.nz](mailto:adventure@marlboroughsounds.co.nz)

“ There are a lot of families out there with kids who would love to get involved ”



Rowi (*Apteryx rowi*), once abundant on the West Coast of the South Island and south East Coast of the North Island, are now the rarest of the world's five kiwi species. In October 2015 the estimated number of Rowi was between 400 and 500 individuals, with the majority living in an 11,000 hectare area of the South Okārito Forest. Two predator-free islands in the Marlborough Sounds are also home to a number of Rowi after successful translocations.

Rowi vary from other species of kiwi in a range of ways. They are quite greyish in colour and often have patches of white on their faces. They also feel much softer to touch than other kiwi whose feathers are quite coarse. Both the male and female rowi take it in turns to look after the egg, and they also have a longer lifespan.

Despite predator trapping the biggest threat to rowi survival are stoats as they continue to kill a high percentage of kiwi chicks, until the chicks are approximately one kilogram in weight and better able to defend themselves. The development of Operation Nest Egg, which sees eggs removed and hatched in captivity before transferring to predator free habitat, has

# ROWI: RAREST OF THEM ALL

meant that many more Rowi survive to adulthood to breed themselves.



In October 2015 the largest transfer of Rowi occurred when more than 50 one year old chicks were transferred from predator free Motuara Island to Okārito Forest. This critical milestone was the culmination of more than a year's work with the Rowi now able to fend for themselves in their natural home.

Kaipupu Point is now being considered as a nursery site for Rowi and discussions are underway to determine suitability. This will be a very exciting opportunity, one that we will keep you updated on.

**Information and images from [www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz)**

## OPERATION NEST EGG

With declining Rowi numbers the Department of Conservation established Operation Nest Egg which involves removing eggs from the risk of predation, hatching them in captivity, and placing the chicks in a predator free environment until they are big enough to fend for themselves (approx. 1kg). They are then returned to the wild. Using the latest monitoring technology, DoC can keep a close eye on Rowi. Transmitters are attached to their legs. By measuring the bird's activity, these intelligent transmitters tell the DOC team where the bird is, when an egg is laid and when a chick hatches.

For more information visit [www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz)



**Rowi Chick**  
Photo: Chrissy Wickes, DoC website



# PEST UPDATE

Sycamores are an increasing pest in Picton as they are spreading across Victoria Domain and the Queen Charlotte Drive. We have had one of our team discover a tree growing on the hill behind the volunteers shed on Kaipupu Point. If you spot this plant while visiting the Sanctuary let us know so that we can remove it.

"Sycamore is a long-lived species that is able to grow in a wide range of conditions. Each tree produces many seeds over it's lifetime and these seeds are well adapted to being wind-dispersed. Seedlings are shade tolerant and can form dense stands in shady conditons. These stands can prevent desirable species from establishing. Sycamore can also spread into areas of native bush." *Information from <http://ecan.govt.nz/publications/General/SycamoreMay2003lowres.pdf>*

**Identification:** red leaf stalk, "helicopter" seedlings, deciduous

**Control:** seedlings can be uprooted, bigger plants should be cut near ground level and treated with a herbicide.

**For more information visit:** [www.weedbusters.org.nz/weed-information/acer-pseudoplatanus/59/](http://www.weedbusters.org.nz/weed-information/acer-pseudoplatanus/59/)

## PEST OR NOT?

Do you recognise these black containers (below)? We would love to hear from you if you dropped these off at the Sanctuary or if you have any idea what they might be for.

Contact Rachel  
[admin@kaipupupoint.co.nz](mailto:admin@kaipupupoint.co.nz)  
027 692 3488



*BELOW: Beautiful summer day in Picton with Voyager of the Seas docked next to Kaipupu Point on January 5th.*





*ABOVE: Le Soleal at anchor off the end of Kaipupu Point while Bluebridge's Strait Feronia passes behind on its way to Picton.*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Look out for more information about these great events.

- 17th February - Evening Speaker Series
- 1st March - Robin Transfer
- 16th March - Evening Speaker Series
- 31st March - Movie night @ EcoWorld Aquarium
- April - Plant Sale
- 20th April - Evening Speaker Series
- 18th May - Evening Speaker Series
- 10th September - Garage Sale

## EVENING SPEAKER SERIES

**WEDNESDAY 17th FEBRUARY**

*'Building ecosystems – case studies in wildlife management'*

**Nick Fox**

Nick will outline some of the work we have done over the last 45 years on goshawks, Mauritius kestrels, New Zealand Falcons, Red Kites, Saker Falcons. Peregrine Falcons, Water Voles, Beavers, Red Squirrels and Rats.

**WEDNESDAY 16th MARCH**

*"Not just another gull"*

**Claudia Mischler**

Black-billed gulls are seen around Picton and usually are confused with red-billed gulls. However, black-bills have suffered big population declines so Claudia has banded chicks with individual coloured/numeric bands so she can find out basic information about their survival, dispersal and breeding. Next time you are on the foreshore take a close look at gulls' legs and if you can get colours and numbers let us know!

**WEDNESDAY 20th APRIL**

*Robin Translocation*

**Bill Cash & Pete Hamill**

Bill will provide a background to bird translocations in the Sounds and Peter will present a video on KP's robin translocation process.

**WEDNESDAY 18th MAY**

*Wildlife Photographer*

**Steve Atwood**

"So many birds, so little time": a guide to maximising your ability to get great bird photos within the short time that most people have for a birding outing. Photographer Steve Atwood will show his beautiful photos of New Zealand birds to illustrate how even amateur photographers can get professional results when they apply a few simple rules and techniques and take the time to learn about bird behaviour. A great talk for bird watchers too as Steve shares techniques for getting up close without disturbing the birds, and demonstrates how a basic understanding of birds greatly improves your chances of seeing birds during a short outing.

# THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS

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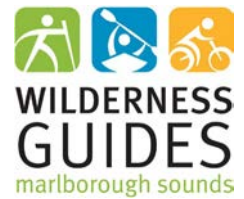
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## GRANT FUNDING



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