



## HUTTON'S SHEARWATER CHARITABLE TRUST

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26 November 2010

The Coordinator  
The Sargood Bequest  
c/- Jackson Valentine Ltd  
PO Box 5546  
Dunedin 9058

Dear Sir/Madam.

### Re: Grant for Burrowscope

I wish to advise that the Trust has recently received the burrowscope for which we received a grant from The Sargood Bequest. Within two weeks of receipt, the equipment was in use at our mountain colonies to determine the productivity of returning birds.

I have enclosed a copy of the invoice for the burrowscope and a copy of an on-line bank statement showing that the payment has been processed. If there is anything else you require, please contact me.

The Trust will acknowledge this support as widely as possible – in research publications, on our website and in future newsletters. If there is a logo we can use, please forward a copy to me at the email address above.

Yours sincerely

Lindsay Rowe  
Treasurer





# THE Hutton's Shearwater

CHARITABLE TRUST

NEWSLETTER

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Kia ora,

There is no shortage of activity and exciting projects taking place within the Hutton's Shearwater Charitable Trust. The big news is that two shearwater translocated from the Kowhai Valley to the Peninsula colony site laid eggs during the season. This was much earlier than expected and confirms that these birds have imprinted on the new site and will continue to return to the peninsula colony. Both eggs have been lost and while disappointing it is not unexpected. First year breeders often lack the experience successfully hatch an egg and bird experts are not surprised about this turn of events. The Trust expects that these birds will try again next season. Read about this on page 2 of the newsletter.

Equally exciting is the research work being undertaken that is starting to yield results on the flight paths and directions taken by this species in undertaking their annual migration to Australia and back. The Trust also recently agreed to a documentary being made on Hutton's shearwater by Claire Clements and Sean Griffin, students studying for their Masters in Natural History Film Making at Otago University. A glimpse of the first filming at a recent Trust meeting highlighted fantastic footage of birds at the Kowhai Colony. It is expected the documentary will be completed toward the end of 2011. Television NZ also recently visited and filmed the Peninsula and Kowhai colonies. Two four minute programmes are expected to appear on the TVNZ 6 programme "Meet the Locals" in March. Keep an eye out for that.

Many thanks for your assistance and interest to date. We look forward to another busy year and hopefully meeting more of our supporters along the way.

Paul McGahan

Chairman, Hutton's Shearwater Charitable Trust

P.s. For full chairman reports from our annual general meetings, visit our website.

## Photos below:

*Left— Film maker, Claire Clements appreciates the rare Kaikoura Giant Weta (Deinacrida parva) in the Kowhai River Hutton's shearwater colony.*

*Kaikoura Suburban School children with DOC officer Brett Cowan at the Maori Festival coordinated by the children & the school. The Trust attended with a stand on the day to spread the Hutton's story.*

*Band of the first bird to return to the Peninsula colony late 2010.*

*Right—Kaikoura Helicopters on the heli pad high in the Puhī Puhī Shearwater Stream colony.*



The Hutton's Shearwater Charitable Trust is a Charities Commission registered entity CC37979. Donations to the Trust attract tax credits.

Hutton's Shearwater Charitable Trust, PO Box 58, Kaikoura 7340. [www.huttonsshearwater.org.nz](http://www.huttonsshearwater.org.nz)

## First egg for Peninsula colony



In the September 2010 newsletter Trustee Phil Bradfield noted that large flocks of Hutton's shearwaters had been observed "rafted-up" at sea in the vicinity of the Kaikoura Peninsula following return from Australian waters. It was also noted that several of the artificial burrows on the new colony site had been visited by returning shearwaters. Since that report, visits to the colony have been at one to nine day intervals. Each nest box has three pins outside the entrance tunnel and another three pins at the chamber entrance.

If the inner pins are moved we know that birds have been in the chamber and not just moving around outside.

Up until mid-November between three and ten boxes were visited between checks. Although only two burrows were visited for the rest of November, these were the source of great excitement as both birds and eggs were present. X17115 (part of the 2007 translocation) was seen in Box 95 with an egg on 17 November and its mate seen in early December, was one of the 2006 chicks.

On 25 November an egg but no bird was seen in burrow 93; later we were to find another 2006 bird

and an un-banded bird which may have been attracted to the site by the calls being played each night over the sound system installed exactly for that purpose.

Unfortunately, both these attempts have failed which was not unexpected from first time breeders, but there is real hope for the future development of the colony.

Since the beginning of December, there has been an influx of birds with up to 15 burrows having been frequented between visits – it is likely that many of these have been from 2008 birds but none have been seen yet as we allow them to familiarise themselves with the site.

Since September we have undertaken some development work on the site. A set of steps and a pathway have been constructed using local labour and more will be completed this winter once the birds have left the site. These will allow controlled access for visitors and researchers through the site. It also reduces the potential for injury on the uneven ground as rabbit burrows and cattle hoof prints hidden in the long grass present a health and safety risk.

The Trust was fortunate to have a group from the Creation Care Study Programme volunteer their time to plant tussocks and low shrubs around the colony site. These were supplied through funding from the WWF programme and planted under the supervision of local nurseryman Doug Hockey. Mike Morrissey (DOC) and Peter Hockey (local volunteer), have also been busy on site watering and looking after plants in the hot dry summer conditions (although this recent rain has been a welcome reprieve).

Lindsay Rowe, Trustee

## Education in schools

Vision and goal:

- To ensure that each of our Kaikoura children are aware of, knowledgeable about and proud of the Hutton's Shearwater; Kaikoura being their last place on earth.
- That we ensure each student is exposed to a formal learning process in their school curriculum twice during their education, once at Year 6 level and once at Year 9 level.

For primary school children, Hutton's will be introduced into the curriculum in Semester 3, 2011 culminating in a trip with Encounter Kaikoura to view the Hutton's Shearwaters at sea in late September.

Kaikoura High School has embraced the concept enthusiastically and learning about Hutton's Shearwaters is being introduced at year 9 level into the departments of English, Social Studies, Maths curricular and hopefully Art.

Many thanks to the schools for their enthusiasm to date. We look forward to continuing this relationship in the community.

## Studying Hutton's shearwater migration

Each autumn the entire population of Hutton's shearwaters leaves New Zealand waters. From the recovery of banded birds we know that they are spending the winter in Australia, but the precise overwintering area and migration route has been unknown.

In collaboration with **Oxford University and Microsoft Research**, the Trust has spent the last year investigating the migration of Hutton's shearwater by attaching tiny geo-locators to the leg bands of shearwaters. These devices record the timing of sunrise and sunset and following computer analysis, give a daily loca-

tion for that bird. This new technology has opened up the study of bird migration. In January 2010, twenty of these devices were put on breeding shearwaters in the Kowhai colony. Following the fledging of their chicks, these birds departed New Zealand waters with the rest of the population in March; returning the following spring to meet up with partners and beginning the breeding process again. Birds with geo-locators will have stored data from their entire migration, and if they could be caught this data could be downloaded to reveal their movements.

Last December a three week field trip was under-

taken to try and recapture these birds. Many long nights spent in the colony paid off when all twenty birds were captured, with only two birds losing the device. The 18 tracks recovered showed for the first time, the migration route and wintering over areas of Hutton's shearwater. Interestingly Hutton's shearwater show differing migration patterns. Most birds flew south around Australia to overwinter in the Timor Sea. These birds then returned to New Zealand the same way. However a small number of birds took a different route, with the birds going north through Torres Strait to get to the same wintering grounds; these birds followed the main group home south, around the bottom of Australia.

Why the population would have different migration patterns is unknown, and it will be interesting to see if the same birds show the same migration patterns in successive years. This research is planned to continue for the next few years to gain a full understanding of Hutton's shearwater migration.

Mike Bell  
Trustee.

*Maps below—winter migration routes for Hutton's shearwaters, as determined by the recent geolocator study.*

