

FROM THE CHAIR

The unexpected and sudden death of our Patron Don Binney has shocked us all. His contribution to art and conservation has been noted and remarked upon by the many who paid tribute to him and his works. He cannot be replaced and our sympathy goes to Philippa and Mary.

On more mundane matters, we continue to seek contributions to enhance the environment of the Island for all that inhabit it. We are grateful for the recent generous grant of \$20,000 from the Lion Foundation. \$10,000 will go towards the installation of a new eco-toilet and \$10,000 toward the control of climbing asparagus.

Other contributions come from the volunteers working on weekend visits and those who assist financially with projects that control weeds and facilitate translocations both to and from Hauturu.

Weather permitting, the trustees will be travelling to the island on November 24 and look forward to seeing the great progress that is being made.

Thank you all for your continued input and support.

John Hagen – Chairman

DONATIONS FOR DON

At the time of Don's death the Binney family requested, in lieu of flowers, donations to the Hauturu Supporters Trust. We are continuing to receive donations and look forward to selecting a project befitting Don's memory and his role as our Patron for fifteen years.

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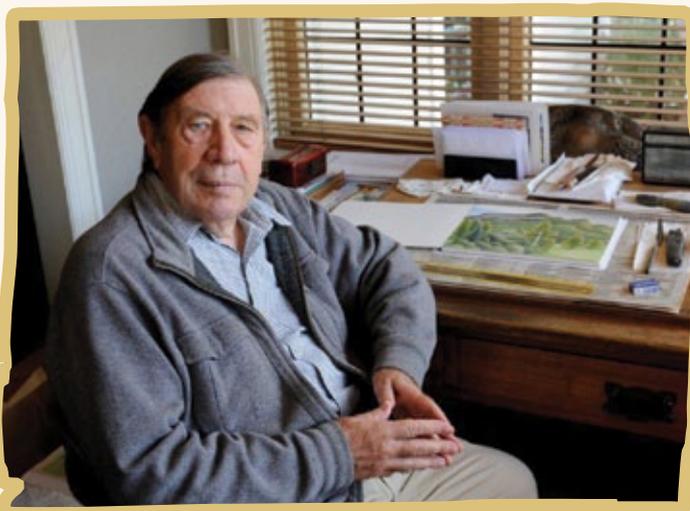
My relationship with Don began vicariously through his art, acquiring cards produced by the Native Forest Action Council entitled *Last Flight of the Kokako*.

I then purchased several posters supporting environmental causes and was privileged to be involved in my firm's acquisition of *Ahuahu Northward II*.

This culminated in my purchase, as an impecunious lawyer, of *Hauturu in the Wake*, (deferring payment of goodwill for a partnership).

As was recorded about Don in *Art News*, in 2004: "Art and life run in extremely close parallel as he combines his passions for bird-watching and painting. Over the years, he has made thousands of notes and drawings documenting the bird life and many of those observations have led to paintings.

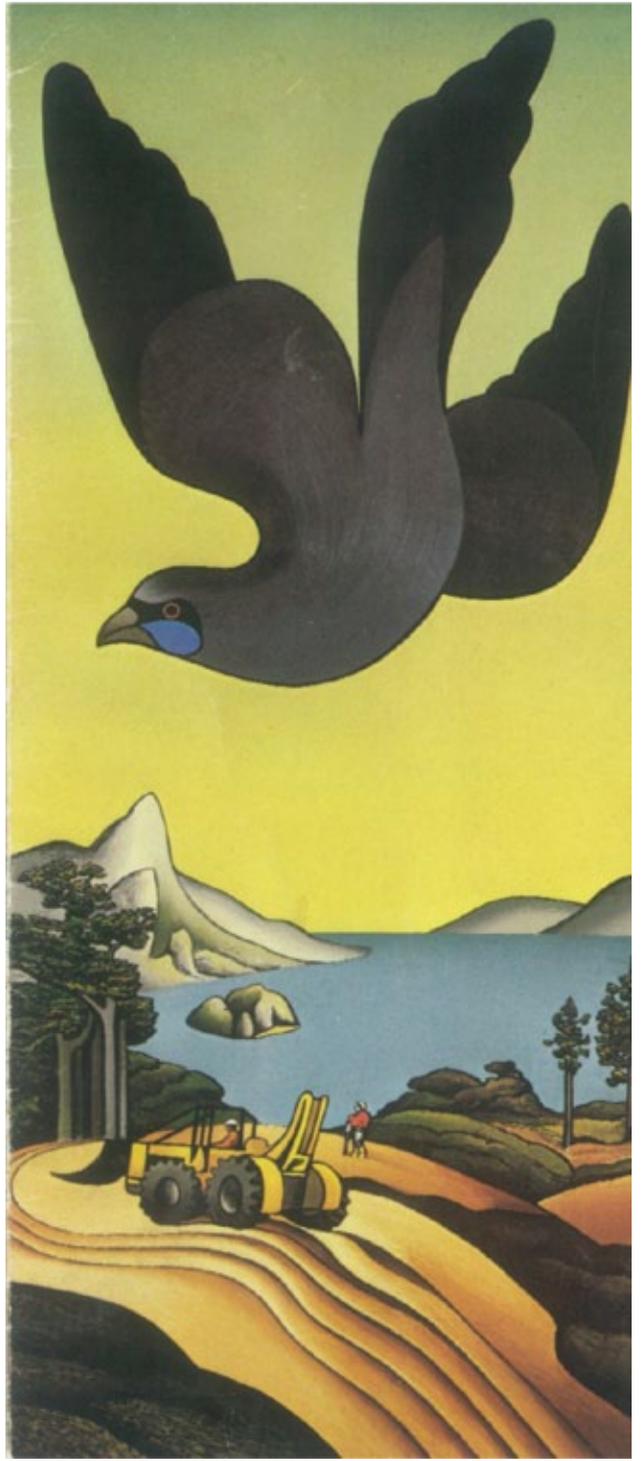
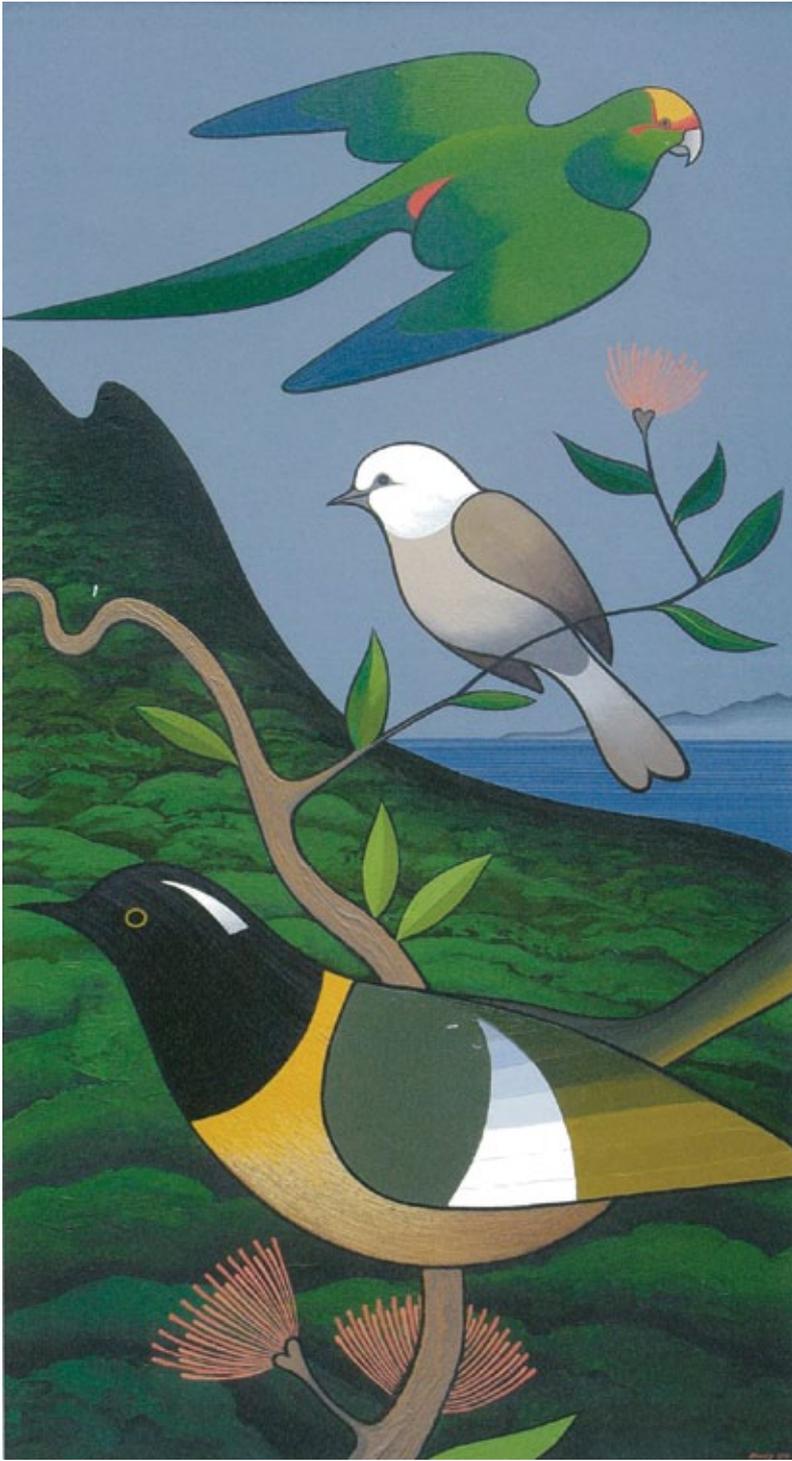
Describing his observational process and its significance for him, he notes, "My day is informed, my morning given some structure, because of an appearance, a little epiphany that I have not made but has happened for me ... the birds appear like little celebrations in the calendar".



JULIA THORNE

IN MEMORIAM: DONALD HALL BINNEY

(24 MARCH 1940 – 14 SEPTEMBER 2012)



► "Diary Note: Tuesday January 6, 2004

South end, Kohimarama Beach, 11, Torea-Pango (variable oyster catcher), 4-5, questionably immature; loudly calling in unison, heads down.

"Don's observations of birds and their environment, like the one above, have provided him with inspiration and direction for more than 40 years".

"He once commented, "... as an orthithologist I've always been thoroughly involved in the way in which the land, the environment the creatures lives in, modifies the creature. The creature of course also modifies the land – it's symbiosis really, isn't it?"

Don's paintings have been described as "moments of visual experience. These are translated from fleeting, flighty and unexpected encounters – drawing on a sense of place, time, history and occasion – into painterly compositions that engage us in a wider investigation of the changing cultural landscape, the importance and significance of nature and universal concerns about the world around us".

In his book *Don Binney Nga Manu/Nga Motu – Birds/Islands* Damian Skinner posed this question to Don: "Let's take a painting: *Hauturu Rata*, for example. What sort of preoccupations were you concerned with at this time? Because this work does seem quite different in some ways from your earlier work".

Don's answer: "That work celebrates the realising of a lifelong desire to go to Little Barrier (Hauturu), where you have the yellow-crowned parakeet, the whitehead and the hihi (stitchbird), which you're not going to see up in the Waitakere Ranges or in the Dome Valley. You've got to go out to that island to spot them and there they are, and there is that steep slope of the Thumb track behind them".

Fellow Trustee Judy Hanbury gave a eulogy at Don's funeral which picks up the story from that point: "Don's first visit to Hauturu came about in April 1977. As an 11-year-old, he had read H. Guthrie-Smith's 'Birdlife on our Distant Shore' and had been fascinated by the mystique of his writing about the stitchbird,

Clockwise from top left: *Hauturu Rata*, 1979; *Last Flight of the Kokako* 1979; *Ahuahu Northward II*, 1977; *Hauturu in the Wake*, 1983

in particular, and its uniqueness to Hauturu.

"By the time we enjoyed a series of visits to Hauturu, the groundbreaking cat eradication had been completed, saddlebacks had been reintroduced and were flourishing, and the island was a safe haven for kakapo, albeit an interim one.

"We were able to appreciate the island as the precious natural treasure-house that it is.

"One ranger's suggestion, that Hauturu warranted a group of 'Friends', set us thinking and we resolved to establish the Hauturu Supporters Trust, launched in 1997. We were thrilled when Don agreed to be Patron of the Trust.

"Hauturu themes had featured in Don's work over several decades. Last year provided a further example of artwork supporting a cause. In November, Don was invited by the Parnell Gallery to introduce a small number of fellow artists to Hauturu. Don didn't undertake the rigours of landing, but accompanied the group on a circumnavigation of the island. The exhibition of 27 paintings and works on paper that resulted (including 3 by Don) generated a much appreciated donation to the Hauturu Supporters Trust.

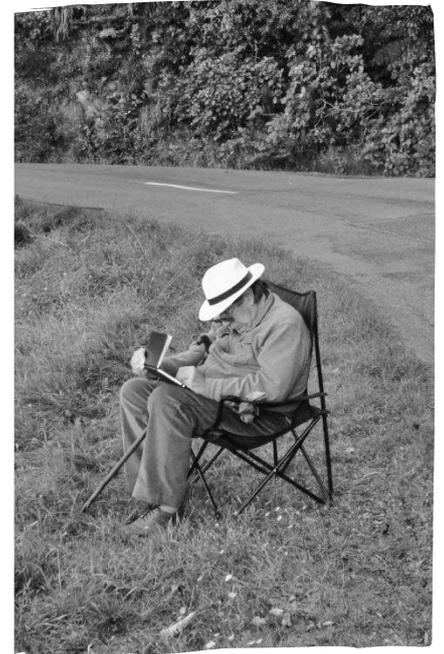
"One appealing work captures Don in typical pose, seated by the boat's rail, leaning slightly forward, one hand firmly on stout stick, hat (wide-brimmed) still worn at a slightly rakish angle, intent on observing the western shore, and the instantly recognizable cluster of gnarled old pohutukawa on Te Titoki Point.

It is Don's wish that his ashes be scattered at sea just off this point."

Don's contribution to the Trust was huge in every sense. I most valued the intellectual discourses we shared at our annual Christmas party. I realise now that I would spend most of the ensuing year in reflecting on what he had said and ensuring that his wisdom was incorporated in the decisions taken by the Trust. I often think of Don as our "alter ego".

May he rest in peace, accompanied by the sound of the dawn chorus.

David McGregor – Hauturu Supporters Trust Settlor Trustee



BARBARA SPEEDY

RANGERS' REPORT

TUATARA The baby tuatara from the 2010-11 breeding season are doing well. Unfortunately one of the juveniles died a few weeks ago, but the remaining 26 have been released into part of the enclosure which is set up with small artificial 'burrows'. They will be kept there and fed for another year until release next spring, which will give them a better chance of survival in the wild.

In November, we are expecting 19 more baby tuatara to return to Hauturu from Victoria University after their successful incubation. One additional tuatara successfully hatched from a late clutch that Mahina found in January, after the other eggs had already been sent to Victoria University. We kept the viable egg in a container of moist vermiculite in the cupboard under the stairway (with relatively constant temperature), moving it to an upstairs cupboard over the winter months. We were all very excited when it hatched on the 2nd September 2012!

Rudolph has returned from Auckland Zoo and the abscess on his jaw, caused by the infection of an old injury, has cleared up. He is feeding well and looks in good condition. All the other adults in the enclosure are looking well and in good condition.

We are currently holding one larger juvenile which we found in a natural burrow outside the enclosure, and who was unaccounted for two years, as were Captain Awesome and Teeny Weeny. All three will be released this spring. Occasionally we see some of the tuatara that have been released near Track 20, and all of those we've seen look healthy and in good condition.

Thank you very much to the Hauturu Supporters Trust for the volunteer input into maintaining the enclosure and for ongoing financial support.

KAKAPO We recently caught Tiwai to change his transmitter. It was a long day – fourteen-and-a-half hours – but it was worth it! He was roosting in thick kiekie but luckily Richard, Leigh, Lesley Baigent and Dave Zimmerman-Vaughn managed to surround him! He looked in really good condition and has put on weight.

Unfortunately when we caught Rakiura for a health check she had a relapse of "crusty bum" (an infection around her cloaca) so we sent her back to Auckland Zoo. She seems to be responding well to treatment and has put on some weight so hopefully she'll be fit and healthy again soon.

The other birds seem to be settling in well to their new home ranges on Hauturu.

SOLAR SYSTEM UPGRADE Since the additional solar panels have been installed the back-up generator has run very little. The increased solar power capacity means that we have included a few more electrical devices in the bunkhouse and the rangers' house, including an electric kettle and a microwave, reducing our reliance on gas and improving the running costs and sustainability of the bunkhouse.

RESEARCH ON HAUTURU O TOI PhD student Anna Carter from Victoria University has been collecting climate data at several sites on Hauturu, installing soil temperature probes at shallow depths in different locations around the island (including inside the enclosure). This is to determine whether there is a difference in incubation temperatures of northern tuatara (*Sphenodon punctatus punctatus*) eggs compared with Stephens

Island tuatara (*Sphenodon punctatus*), given the warmer climate up north. A difference in soil temperature could influence egg survival, incubation rates and sex determination in northern tuatara compared with Stephens Island tuatara.

All 19 eggs from the 2011-12 breeding season have been incubated at 21.5 °C at Victoria University. In previous years, roughly half of the eggs were incubated at 20 °C to produce females and the other half at 23 °C to produce males. Incubating the eggs at 21.5 °C is an experiment to determine whether there is a sexual bias due to the warmer climate on Hauturu compared to Stephens Island.

Michael Anderson from Auckland University has started fitting transmitters on long-tailed cuckoo (*Koekoera Eudynamys taitensis*). So far he has managed to mist-net one cuckoo, fit a satellite transmitter to it, and is monitoring its movements. It's the first time anyone has ever fitted satellite transmitters on long-tailed cuckoo so the results of his research will be really interesting. He's already got some interesting data. The cuckoo is usually in the Waipawa Valley where it was caught, but he's had one location 10 km out to sea towards Tawharanui Peninsula, and it also went to Kawau Island over a two-day period before returning to Hauturu.

VENI, WEEDY, VICI After a fairly wet winter the weeding plots were pretty slippery and muddy for the start of the 2012 weeding season. However, it was no match for the enthusiasm and skill of the new weed team, which has been making great inroads in knocking off this season's weeding plots. Karen Riddell, Mike Alley, Jess Arnold, Fraser Weir and Joe Chapman set up house in the bunkhouse in early September and have settled in well to island life.

We are now over halfway through the weed season (September – November) and can confirm that, at least in the southwest, the climbing asparagus problem on Hauturu appears to be waning with most search days being asparagus-free. Orau Gorge, however, still offers a challenge, both for access and for the sheer number of plants still found there. We have reduced the problem to hundreds rather than thousands of plants found, but recognise that there is still a lot of work to be done on this infestation.

We have been lucky to have the search team augmented in October by volunteers Ed, Helen, Athansius and Warren. As well as expanding our search effort, these hard-working volunteers have made a huge impact on the weeds on the flats like thistles, inkweed and nightshade, as well as remarking weed plot boundaries and undertaking stream searches.

The abseil weed team started after Labour Weekend and will be spending the majority of their time on the cliffs in Orau Gorge, with the rest of their time on the Main Cliff on the western side of the island.

We've made a great start on aerial strop spraying of pampas on the island, with two days' effort already spent on the western side; no mean feat given the weather we've been dealing with this spring! Focus on this side is long overdue as there have been a number of recent slips, which are ideal pampas establishment sites, and previous effort has been concentrated around the high-volume infestation at Pohutukawa Flat.

OTHER WORK AROUND THE ISLAND The Department of Conservation biodiversity team from Warkworth and Great Barrier Island came to Hauturu o Toi to carry out the bio-security check on the rodent tunnels around the shoreline. This involved replacing poison baits and ink-tracking tunnel cards and installing



Clockwise from top left: Manu the tuatara hatchling; Lesley Baigent with Tiwai; John Stewart banding tieke watched by Mahina; John Stewart, Kevin Parker and Leigh Joyce weighing and measuring whitehead; the weed team with Liam and Mahina; fitting Tiwai with a transmitter.

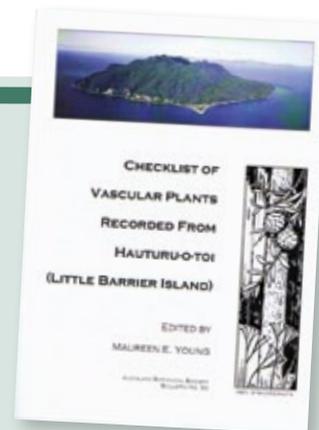
new tunnels that had been destroyed by coastal slips and rock falls. Fortunately there were no rodent prints on the tracking tunnel cards, but rather just those of a few geckos, skinks and some weta.

TRANSLOCATIONS In May, twenty-four wetapunga *Deinacridia heteracantha* were transferred off Hauturu o Toi. Twelve adults – consisting of six males and six females – were transferred to Auckland Zoo, and another twelve adults – six males and six females – were transferred to Butterfly Creek. The translocation was achieved with the input of Auckland Zoo, Butterfly Creek and the Department of Conservation.

In June, a total of 100 popokatea (whiteheads *Mohoua albicilla*) and twenty tieke (saddleback *Philesturnus rufusater*) were transferred from Hauturu o Toi to three other islands in the Hauraki Gulf. Forty whiteheads were transferred to Motuihe, 30 to Motutapu and 30 to Rangitoto. Twenty tieke were transferred to Motutapu and Rangitoto. The main purpose of the translocation was to broaden the gene pool in the existing populations of tieke on Motutapu and Rangitoto islands and to take another step towards restoration of the natural balance on Motuihe, Motutapu and Rangitoto.

Thank you again for all of your volunteer input, time and support in conserving the special uniqueness of Hauturu o Toi.

Nichollette Brown and Richard Walle, Hauturu Rangers



HAUTURU PLANTS CHECKLIST

As part of its 75th Jubilee celebrations the Auckland Botanical Society has launched *Bulletin #30*, 'Checklist of Vascular Plants Recorded From Hauturu-o-Toi (Little Barrier Island)', edited by Maureen Young.

At the launch, Maureen spoke of her adventures on Hauturu collecting material for an herbarium, which now lives in the ranger's office, and for this publication.

Bulletin #30 is available to buy at \$20 per copy (plus postage). It is a comprehensive annotated plant list with a small selection of colour photographs. Also included in the appendix are checklists of the island's liverworts and mosses.

To obtain a copy please contact Maureen Young on 09 425 7162.

KIWI MONITORING 2012

Our keen team of volunteers headed off on Saturday 14 July to carry out this year's kiwi monitoring on Hauturu. We were met by ranger Nicholette Brown and her two helpers, Nick and Gen, who were to help us with the monitoring. After settling into the bunkhouse and spending some time getting to know each other we were briefed on kiwi monitoring and the six sites we would be using that have now been used for a period of 19 years to record kiwi on Hauturu.

We managed to get our minimum of four nights of monitoring completed over the week despite some heavy rain and wind. As always, some memorable encounters with kiwi and other interesting night noises from ruru, kaka, Cook's petrel, grey-faced petrel and little blue penguin. Kiwi numbers were a little lower than 2009 and 2011 but overall would appear reasonably stable. Some keen volunteers helped Nichy with various jobs in the tuatara enclosure and service buildings. Some other volunteers managed some good fishing, while others enjoyed tramping with our intrepid botanist, Maureen. The weather also dictated an early departure on Friday.

A big thanks to our skipper Dave Wade who sponsored our travel costs by supplying his time and his boat *Sumo* at no charge. Also a big thanks to all the good keen volunteers for 2012 too.

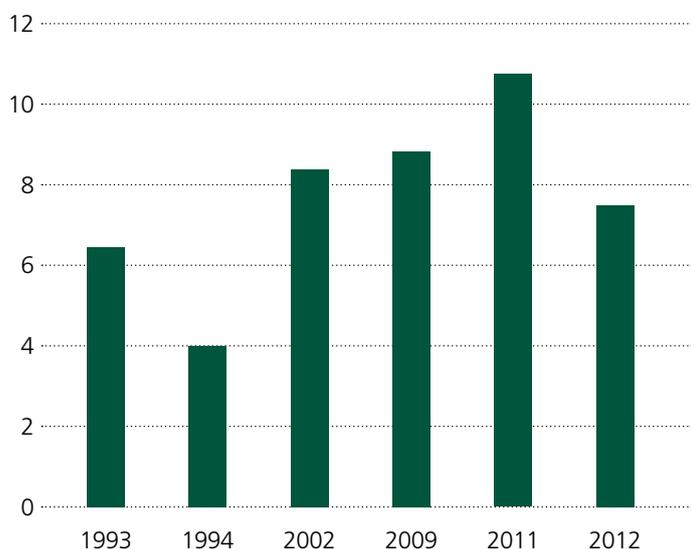
We plan to carry out kiwi monitoring on Hauturu in 2013 in early July. We will plan for nine days on the island, so if you are interested and don't mind trekking rugged country in the dark, please contact Lyn Wade at ddlc.wade@xtra.co.nz

Lyn Wade – Hauturu Supporters Trust trustee and group leader



The kiwi monitoring team: Lyn Wade, Hugh Gardiner, Jenny Goodwright, Hugh Harris, Sharon Kast, Lianne Kooiman, Jonathon Pote, Sian Potier, Ngaire Skelton, Maureen Young plus Nichy Brown, Gen Spargo and Nick Fizontzidis from the island.

Chart comparing the average number of calls, both male and female, for the first hour of unsolicited call count monitoring carried out on Hauturu six times over a period of 19 years.



WORKING WEEKENDS AUTUMN 2013

Unfortunately our October weekend had to be cancelled because of stormy weather but we look forward to reporting on the December weekend in the next newsletter.

Two working weekends are planned for autumn 2013. The island is particularly busy with research and translocation projects so our dates are late in the season.

Target dates (weather dependent)

April 6/7 (back-up date 20/21 April)

May 4/5 (back-up date 11/12 May)

All participants need to be reasonably fit and agile and prepared to cope, if necessary, with a wet and difficult landing over large, slippery boulders. We will do a variety of jobs for the rangers plus there will be time for walking, bird-watching and botanising.

For further details and to register your interest in either of these weekends, please ring Judy Hanbury 09 817 7604 or email her at jrhanbury@actrix.co.nz giving your full name, home address and phone number.

Closing date for enquiries: Thursday 14 February 2013

Hauturu Supporters Trust

The Trust was established in 1997 to help support conservation and research activities on Hauturu Little Barrier Island. Membership of the Trust is by subscription and donations are also welcome. All donations and subscriptions are directed towards activities of benefit to Hauturu.

Your subscription ensures that you receive *Hauturu*, the Trust newsletter, twice a year, bringing you up-to-date news from and about the island. Copies of past issues are available on request.

If you wish to become a supporter, make a donation or offer help in some other way, please contact the Trust secretary Sandra Jones. **Phone:** 09 817 2788

If unavailable phone: Judy Hanbury 09 817 7604

Email: info@littlebarrierisland.org.nz

Postal: LBI/Hauturu Supporters Trust, PO Box 48 232, Blockhouse Bay, Auckland 0644

Website: www.littlebarrierisland.org.nz

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The Little Barrier Island (Hauturu) Supporters Trust is a registered charitable entity in terms of the Charities Act 2005. Registration No. CC24983

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