



## **Matakohē/Limestone Island Rangers Monthly Report – February 2008**

- We have had a quieter month after the very busy time at the end of last year, meaning a shorter Rangers Report this month. This has given us the opportunity to take some time off and enjoy the fine summer weather – good timing! Special thanks go to Donna Stuthridge and family, Paul Cornille, John Elliot and John Ward and Karin who have very capably looked after the island in our absence.

### **Flora**

- Rabbit Island has once again been sprayed by Betta Contractors with assistance from the NRC. This small island was sprayed twice last year, as it was heavily infested with moth plant and pampas and a small mount of gorse. As well as looking after Rabbit Island itself this work also helps protect Matakohē-Limestone Island from these wind borne weeds.
- Thanks to Paul who did a great job pulling wattle seedlings during his stay.
- Pete has also been spraying periwinkle, which just seems to keep coming up despite many years of spaying even coming back in relatively densely planted areas.

### **Kiwi**

- Three new chicks have come to the island this month, via the Native Bird Recovery Centre. This brings our current tally of kiwi on the island to 26, including the four resident adults.
- Kahui Whetu had her six monthly transmitter check this month and is looking well.



**Cathy changing the transmitter band on Kahui Whetu – a hospital band is used & reinforced with electrical tape**

## Predator Control

- We have caught 2 rats on the island this month; both caught in the new DOC 200's – no second chances with these traps. One of the rats caught was a ship rat. This is interesting given that ship rats are considered to be poor swimmers. It possibly arrived via some driftwood or by boat.
- We also caught 2 weasels this month in the buffer zone. Both were big males and both were caught on Knight Island.
- Matt has completed the maintenance on the south side bait stations – replacing tags lost during the winter storms & spraying out the tunnels so they are easier locate.
- Matt and Pete also serviced the north end bait stations and have almost completed replacing the old Fenn traps with the DOC 200's.

## General

- Thanks to Ken Massey who came over this month and gave the sheep a much needed shearing. They look a lot better and will certainly be feeling happier to have all that wool off in this hot weather. We also took the opportunity to drench and vaccinate the lambs.
- The Wednesday volunteers who came over this month did a great job of clearing the island tracks. Park Care also returned this month, weed eating the tracks. It is amazing how quickly the vegetation takes over given half a chance, but the tracks are now looking really good - thank you to all.
- The barge had its 300 hour service completed by Marine North.
- Hash House Harriers came to the island one evening for a run and BBQ on the beach, a good time was had by all.
- Many visitors to the island in January will have seen the Oyster Catcher nest on the sand barge beach behind the signs. We can report that the pair successfully hatched 3 chicks which all appear to be doing well.

## Up coming

- **Volunteer Wednesday – will be on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> March.** Pickup at 9.00am returning after lunch approximately 1.30pm. This month we will complete the track pruning and if possible make a start on the south end bait stations, which will also be due.

Pete & Cathy



Proudly Supported by; Forest Floor Nursery, Harbour Marine Ltd, Marine North Ltd, Northpower, Northland Port Corp, Northland Regional Council, North Tugz, Onerahi Lions, Phoenix Boats, Rentokil, Tawapou Nursery